THE POSTMODERN RE-MAKING OF HISTORY: A METAHISTORICAL STUDY OF JULIAN BARNES'S FICTION

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Baysar TANIYAN

Supervisor
Assoc. Prof Dr. Mehmet Ali ÇELİKEL

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Jüri Başkanı
Prof. Dr. Himmet UMUNÇ

Jüri-Danışman
Doç. Dr. Mehmet Ali ÇELİKEL

Jüri
Doç. Dr. Meryem AYAN

Jüri
Yrd. Doç. Dr.
Cumhur Yılmaz MADRAN

Jüri
Yrd. Doç. Dr
Azer Banu KEMALOĞLU

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Prof. Dr. Turhan KAÇAR
Enstitü Müdürü

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Signature:

Name, Last Name: Baysar TANİYAN

To Reyhan

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ABSTRACT

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Framed by a historiography of postmodernism as it has been configured by such theoreticians as Foucault, White and Hutcheon, this thesis will show how postmodern history alters established knowledge about the past and how this alteration is reflected in postmodern English fiction. The study will focus on Julian Barnes's fiction, which is understood as engaging with the difficulty of narrating the past accurately. In the postmodern period, not only is the authenticity of the historical trace put into question, but also is the established notion of linear, reliable historical narration. Barnes's fiction is not about the past, but resembles an archaeology – to use Foucault's term – and a metahistory – to use Hayden White's term – which together define those ways in which the past can be perceived and with what degree of accuracy it can be narrated. By means of both formal and thematical analyses of Barnes's fiction, the present thesis aims to discuss the postmodern remaking of history through competitive discourses embedded in complicated power relations.

Key Words: Julian Barnes, postmodernism, historiography, metahistory, historiographic metafiction

ÖZET

TARİHİN POSTMODERN YENİDEN YAPIMI: JULIAN BARNES'IN ROMANLARINDA METATARİHSEL ÇALIŞMA

Taniyan, Baysar
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Bu çalışma, Foucault, White ve Hutcheon gibi kuramcılar tarafından yapılandırılan postmodern tarih yazım kuramı çerçevesinde, postmodern tarihin geçmişe ilişkin bilgilerimizi nasıl değiştirdiğini ve bu değişimin postmodern İngiliz romanında nasıl yansıtıldığını göstermektedir. Çalışma, geçmişi doğru olarak anlatmanın güçlüğü ile yakından ilgilenen Julian Barnes'ın kurgusal eserlerine odaklanmaktadır. Postmodern dönemde, sadece tarihsel izlerin güvenilirliği değil, doğrusal ve güvenilir tarihsel anlatı da sorgulanmaktadır. Barnes'ın kurgusu geçmiş ile ilgili değildir, ama geçmişin ne derece doğrulukla anlatılabileceği ve algılanabileceğinin yollarını tanımlayan Foucault'nun arkeolojisine ve Hayden White'ın meta-tarihine benzemektedir. Bu tez, Barnes romanlarını biçimsel ve tematik açılardan çözümleyerek, karmaşık güç ilişkileri içindeki söylemler aracılığıyla tarihin postmodern yöntemlerle yeniden oluşturulması olgusunu tartışmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Julian Barnes, postmodernizm, tarih yazımı, meta-tarih, tarihsel üstkurmaca

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

History	A History of the World in 10½ Chapters
TP	The Porcupine
EE	England England
FP	Flaubert's Parrot
BSMM	Before She Met Me
SE	The Sense of An Ending
TO	Talking It Over
A&G	Arthur & George

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Julian Barnes (b. 1946) has been acknowledged as one of the most prolific novelists in contemporary England. His fiction investigates the possibilities of narrating the past, whether personal or national, through a great range of stylistic and thematic varieties, which are the definitive features of postmodernism, as in his quasi-mythological A History of the World in $10^{1/2}$ Chapters or in his experimental biography The Flaubert's Parrot. Thereby, he not only examines the authenticity of historical knowledge but also subverts established notions of linear and reliable narration of history. As if responding to the postmodern theories of history presented by Michel Foucault (1926-1984) whose archaeological method "tries to define not the thoughts, representations, images, themes, preoccupations that are concealed or revealed in discourses; but those discourses themselves" (2002: 156) and Hayden White (b. 1928) who proposes that the historical work is "a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse" (1975: ix), Barnes's fiction becomes an archaeology of the past or a metahistory by emphasizing the textuality of the past. In his novels, he questions historical knowledge by playing off historical traces, assesses the accuracy in narration and then suggests in a post-structuralist manner that histories are re-made rather than narrated. Inevitably, this re-making includes multiple points of views, partiality, subjectivity, narrative positioning which is clearly associated with the ideological situatedness of the narrator. Therefore, in this study, the postmodern novelistic strategies used in Barnes's fiction for a process of historical re-writing will be explored in order to show how his fiction illustrates the ways that postmodernism problematizes historical knowledge about the past and how postmodern fiction deals with the difficult task of narrating the past accurately.

Following a chronological pattern, the first part of this introductory chapter will analyse how historical knowledge is textually transmitted in fiction by focusing on the relationship between history and fiction. This part will demonstrate both the attempts to separate the two realms of history and fiction, and inevitable boundary crossings between the two beginning from the ancient times. In the second part, the development of the historical novel prior to the emergence of postmodern historiographic metafiction will be presented as a framework of reference for a critical study of Barnes's historiographic metafictions.

1.1. History in Fiction, Fiction in History

The nature of historical knowledge has been a recurrent topic for postmodern criticism and aroused much controversy. In Return to Essentials, Geoffrey Elton (1921-1994) defends "what may appear to be very old-fashioned convictions and practices" holding a firm belief in those entrenched positions concerning the reality of historical studies" (2001: 3) However, in E. H. Carr's (1892-1982) point of view, "history consists of a corpus of ascertained facts" (1987: 9). For Carr, these facts are like "fish on the fish monger's slab," which are collected by the historian to be cooked and served "in whatever style appeals to him" (1987: 9). This is a quick recipe of how historical knowledge can be produced. With the addition of the historian's interpretation, this knowledge becomes highly subjective. As Carr stresses, "this element of interpretation enters into every fact of history" (1987: 13); consequently, historical knowledge no longer becomes objective. For Beverley Southgate, it is an "act of self-creation" (2005: 2). According to Keith Jenkins, rather than being a solid, unchanging or a given category of knowledge, it is "inevitably a personal construct, a manifestation of the historian's perspective as a 'narrator'" (2003: 14). Inevitably, history has come to be the historian's discourse which entails ideological selectivity and narrative positioning. The claim of the academic historian since the Enlightenment to produce a solid historical knowledge, otherwise known as historical positivism, has been thoroughly taken under question in the postmodern period.

Such epistemological issues surrounding history in the postmodern period not only have put it at risk as a major academic discipline but also have fuelled recurrent

discussions since classical antiquity on whether history is a sub-branch of literature or a field having close affinities with literature but working on its own terms and conditions. While literature has been considered to belong in the realm of imagination, history has been associated with real events and people. History relates what happened in the past and therefore should display a high degree of possibility. Fiction, on the other hand, may take its subject matter from improbable events as well as probable events. In The Republic, Plato (428–348 BC) does not make a clear distinction between the historical story and the fictional story. However, the mythical stories which he constantly refers to can be read as historical tales (Hamilton, 2004: 7). According to Plato, such mythical or historical tales can contain invention "because we don't know where the truth about ancient things lies" (1991: 60). He points out that the best thing to do is to "[liken] the lies to the truth as best as we can" to make historical tales "useful" (1991: 60). For him, historical tales are crucial in the education system of the state since "we make use of tales with children before exercises" (1991: 54). He warns that children should not be confronted with "any tales fashioned by just anyone" in case they might "take into their souls opinions for the most part opposite to those we'll suppose they must have when they are grown up" (1991: 54-55). To secure this, "the makers of tales" should be taken under the control of the state which will approve "a fine tale" to be told to children by nurses and mothers (Plato, 1991: 55). It can be suggested, then, in Plato's ideal state, tales of any sort – be it historical or fictional – are subject to strict state control. The only possibility for those tales to exist is to conform to the ruling ideology of the state. Thus, it can also be inferred that the content of the tale can be altered regardless of the truth value it contains:

> Because I suppose we'll say that what both poets and prose writers say concerning the most important things about human beings is bad – that many happy men are unjust, and many wretched ones just, and that doing injustice is profitable if one gets away with it, but justice is someone else's good and one's own loss. We'll forbid them to say such things and order them to sing and to tell tales about the opposites of these things (Plato, 1991: 70).

If virtue is punished and vice is rewarded in a tale, it might set a bad example for the youth. It can be asserted that historical tales, which can be allowed in the ideal state, will be constructed in accordance with the ideology of the state to best serve the well being of it and its citizens. The truth value of such tales is, therefore, not the first

criterion that would grant them approval. Disregarding the question of accuracy, those tales should rather be fashioned in a certain manner which propagates virtues like honesty and justice. Thus, what is proposed here is the modification or fictionalization of the historical knowledge which would later become one of the crucial discussion points in the postmodern debate on history.

Since Plato does not make a clear distinction between historical and fictional tales, this process of modification, then, is not reserved for historical tales solely. He explains that "everything that's said by tellers of tales or poets" is "a narrative of what has come to pass, what is, or what is going to be" (1991: 71). Then, it can be suggested that the historical tale for Plato is the narrative of what has come to pass. On the other hand, Aristotle (384 – 322 BC), in The Poetics, introduces a more clarified distinction between history and fiction. For him, it is not the matter of style – prose or verse – by which the poet and the historian differ;

> For the historian and the poet do not differ according to whether they write in verse or without verse –the writings of Herodotus could be put into verse, but they would be no less a sort of history in verse than they are without verses. But the difference is that the former relates things that have happened, the latter things that may happen. For this reason poetry is a more philosophical and more serious things than history; poetry tends to speak of universals, history of particulars (2001: 97-98).

While the universal for Aristotle is "the sort of thing that a certain kind of person may well say or do in accordance with probability and necessity", the particular refers to a specific event that happened in the past (2001: 98). He problematizes his distinction "for there is nothing to prevent some of the things that have happened from being the sort of things that may happen according to probability, ie. that are possible" (2001: 98). Thus, it can be argued that the borderline drawn between history and fiction with regard to the probability and the possibility of the narrated event becomes indeterminate.

The historical works by Herodotus (484–425 BC) and Thucydides (460-395 BC) also include fictional elements most of which are drawn from Homer's epic poems The Iliad and The Odyssey. In The Histories, Herodotus attempts to distinguish his account from the mythical stories like the cult of Heracles by devaluing them as "silly story"

(2008: 119). This can be interpreted as an attempt to create a credible narrative depending on the accounts of the eyewitness and personal inquiries. As a historian, while he tries to build a verified account, he consciously questions the reliability of the same sources: "I am obliged to record the things I am told, but I am certainly not required to believe them – this remark may be taken to apply to the whole of my account" (2008: 457). On the other hand, in The Peloponnesian War, Thucydides resorts to the law of probability and necessity which Aristotle reserves for poetry (Aristotle, 2001: 98). In the absence of the historical document and eyewitnesses, Thucydides applies to his intuitions and assumptions within the borders of probability and necessity:

> My method in this book has been to make each speaker say broadly what I supposed would have been needed on any given occasion, while keeping as closely as I could to the overall intent of what was actually said. In recording the events of the war my principle has been not to rely on casual information or my own suppositions, but to apply the greatest possible rigour in pursuing every detail both of what I saw myself and of what I heard from others. It was laborious research, as eyewitnesses on each occasion would give different accounts of the same event, depending on their individual loyalties or memories (2009: 12).

Although Thucydides declares that romance is absent in his history, both he and Herodotus refer directly to Homer. In Book Two of The Histories, Herodotus discredits the existence of River Ocean as a fictitious creation of Homer or one of the other poets from the past (2008: 103). However, in Book Four, he makes use of lines from Homer's The Odyssey to support his view on why the cattle in Scythia do not grow horns (2008: 244). Thucydides also makes use of and, at the same time, discredits Homer. In the first chapter of Book One, Thucydides shows Homer as the best proof to indicate the absence of common action or common name among the Greek tribes in the ancient times. However, few paragraphs later, Thucydides undermines the sufficiency and credibility of Homer; "being a poet, he would exaggerate" (2009: 7). Then, both Herodotus and Thucydides, as historians, incorporate Homeric stories into their accounts, and thus, blend historicity with fiction.

Even though Thucydides carefully tries to distinguish his historiography from poetry by claiming that there is "less faith in the glorified tales of the poets and the compilations of the prose chroniclers, whose stories are written more to please the ear than to serve the truth" (2009: 12), he problematizes his enterprise as he confesses the

difficulty in reproducing "the exact words used" (2009: 12). Thus, he explains that he makes his speakers say according to what is appropriate to his opinion. In other words, he fictionalizes their speeches. Hamilton, thus, states that "in the absence of possible documentation, Thucydides relies on probability and assumptions, on his own sense of what sounds inevitable and fitting" (2004:10). Therefore, it can be argued that for Herodotus and Thucydides the process of creating a historical knowledge becomes an act of self-creation consisting of interpretation and fictitious stories despite their insistence on accuracy and insistence on to avoid using mythical resources. In other words, they created historical works which included fictional elements, thus making historiography and fiction overlap with each other.

In Greek historiography, Homer appears to be an authoritative figure to be emulated both in terms of style and content. For Michael Grant, "the debt of the ancient historians to Homer was enormous" since "Homer's telling of [the Trojan War] was believed to be historically accurate" (2005: 23). This is surely due to the belief that epic poetry was considered to be based on hard fact and the heroic characters in epic were assumed to be the true ancestors of the Greeks (Grant, 2005: 23). For Aristotle, "what is improbable, from which amazement arises most, is more admissible in epic because the audience does not see the person in action" (2001: 113). He points out that Homer "has taught the other poets to tell untruths in the right way" (2011: 113). This interaction and indebtedness explicitly undermine attempts to distinguish history from fiction, a case which was inherited by the Roman historiography. Cicero (106 – 43 BC), in On the Laws (51 BC), clarifies that "in history the standard by which everything is judged is the truth, while in poetry it is generally the pleasure one gives (qtd. in Grant, 2005: 27). Reminding Horace's Ars Poetica (18 BC), Cicero asserts that poetry gives pleasure while the major principle of history is truthfulness and accuracy. In The History of Rome (Books I – V), Livy (64 or 59 BC – AD 17) makes use of fictitious stories consciously because he believes these stories are the perfect means to describe the magnitude of Roman civilization: "To antiquity is granted the indulgence of making the beginnings of cities more impressive by mingling human affairs with the divine" (Livy, 2006: 2-3). Asserting that history is "both old (*vetus*) and generally known," Livy proposes that historians will either "bring some greater authenticity to the subject matter or that they will surpass the unpolished attempts of antiquity (*vetustas*) in literary style"

(2006: 1). One can infer from the statements given above that if a historian favours a total commitment to accuracy and truth, then, he has to make concession in his style because the truth or the accurate report of an event may not turn into an appealing or didactic story. The value given to excellence in style and rhetorical skills puts the concern for accuracy into secondary place. As Livy exalts Roman civilization, he makes use of rhetoric risking accuracy. It can be argued that history, then, both teaches and delights as poetry does according to Horace (2001: 132). Consequently, it is fair to say that history and fiction merged in Roman times and historical facts are left open to fictitious manipulations for the sake of achieving excellence in style and creating and directing public opinions.

In the Middle Ages, history was still classified in the category of grammar or rhetoric (Deliyannis, 2003: 1). In The Etymologies (636), Isidore of Seville (560–636) points out that "this discipline [history] has to do with Grammar, because whatever is worthy of remembrance is committed to writing" (2006: 67). On the other hand, for Isidore, history is different from fables because history is "plausible narration," but fables relate things that "have not happened and cannot happen" (2006: 67). Regarding the function of history, Isidore believes that historians "have imparted past deeds for the instruction of the living" (2006: 67). As in the Roman times, Isidore places history in the domain of rhetoric and attributes to it didactic purpose. This is what Bede (672–735) also highlights in his preface to Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum (731):

> For whether an history shall contain good things concerning good men, the careful hearer is thereby stirred up and provoked to follow after well-doing; or whether it shall report evil things concerning froward men, the devout and well-disposed hearer or reader none the less, by flying that is evil and noisome to his soul, is himself moved thereby more earnestly to follow after the things he knoweth to be good and acceptable to God (1962: 4).

History is not just the stories about the past, but it includes moral lessons for the reader. While the misdeeds of people in the past should provide a lesson, the good behaviour, on the other hand, should be inspirational. Medieval historians adapted a Christian perspective and reduced their material to a Christian context. Stories of the Greek and the Roman mythology were replaced by the stories of the Christian mythology. In this period, the word "historia" literally meant "story which could refer to

narrative works of art, saints' lives, parts of the Bible, the literal sense of scriptural texts, liturgical offices, epic poems, and other texts and objects" (Deliyannis, 2003: 3). Historical writing was not professionalized, and the produced texts were of local history and composed by the specially commissioned clergymen. However, through the end of the Middle Ages and with the coming of the Renaissance, the idea of history began to change leading to the Enlightenment period. While with the Renaissance, "the humanistic focus on classical antiquity led to a new phase of writing history following classical models", with the Reformation, "the Protestant challenge to the universality of the Church led to histories written for specifically polemical religious purposes" (Deliyannis, 2003: 3). Nevertheless, history and fiction still intermingled in the period as Sir Philip Sidney (1554–1586) in An Apology for Poetry (1579) asserts; "historiographers, although their lips sound of things done, and verity be written in their foreheads, have been glad to borrow both fashion and perchance weight of the poets" (1973: 97). Moreover, he points out that "the best of the historian is subject to the poet" (1973: 111). Even though the spirit of the Enlightenment turned the previous conceptions upside down, history had still way to announce itself as an established and independent branch of learning. This was an opportunity as the intellectual world freed itself from the divine schemes or mythologies and man was put into the centre as a move towards humanism. Likewise history could free itself from the fictitious stories and concentrate on men.

Up to the Enlightenment, discussions concerning history had been concentrated on the terms of style and purpose and on the conditions of possibility and probability. Therefore, each discussion inevitably had included the comparison of poetry (fiction) and history. Accordingly, the historical works incorporated fictional elements because either of the lack of the solid historical records or the concern for rhetoric. Moreover, as the subject matters had been chosen mainly from the mythological or the biblical stories, it can be suggested that historical texts did not function as a tool for producing or transmitting knowledge, but as a tool for ideological manipulation. These texts, it can be argued, did narrate history but processed and re-made them in a way similar to postmodern historiographic metafiction. Moving from the issues of style and manner, arguments on history since the Enlightenment and still in the postmodern period, however, have been conducted more on philosophical and epistemological terms. The

main concern has been the question how historical knowledge can be produced or how this knowledge can be applied to the man's understanding of his own nature and the society in which he lives. Nevertheless, the increasing dominance and successes of the natural sciences overshadowed the claim of history to produce valid knowledge. In his Discourse on Method (1637), René Descartes (1596-1650) formulates what would later become the core tenets of the Cartesian theory of knowledge. Placing the knowledge of God to the top, Descartes appoints the faculty of reason for judging the truth value of any knowledge. Reason is important for Descartes because by virtue of reason, he distinguishes men from the beasts. To reach the true knowledge, one should "raise" in his mind "above things of sense" and quit the belief in imagination since "while neither our imagination nor our sense can ever assure us of anything, if our understanding does not intervene" (Descartes, 2003: 26). Descartes discredits history due to its probable liaison with romance:

> Even the most accurate of histories, if they do not exactly misrepresent or exaggerate the value of things in order to render them more worthy of being read, at least omit in them all the circumstances which are basest and least notable; and from this it follows that what is retained is not portrayed as it really is, and that those who regulate their conduct by examples which they derive from such a source are liable to fall into the extravagances of the knights-errant of romances (2003: 6-7).

One can infer from the passage that the total outcome, vision or the knowledge produced out of the historian's study does not cover the whole reality but only a certain part of it. Descartes warns that those who may take the historian's study as a didactic source are likely to be misled. It is suggested that as histories are documents written to be read, there is always the danger of misrepresentation or exaggeration. In other words, desiring to be read, the historian has to reshape, embellish and modify the historical fact and create a fictional representation of this fact which betrays the original form while becoming appealing for reading.

Against the supposedly unreliability and insignificance of historical discourse, Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), came up with his New Science (1725) confronting the dominance of the natural sciences in the Enlightenment by introducing fresh insights concerning both the subject matter of history and its potency for yielding knowledge. His influential work is now considered as one of the most important pieces to

inaugurate modern philosophy of history to be followed by George W. F. Hegel, Robin G. Collingwood and Hayden White, respectively (Bentley, 2006: 382). According to Collingwood (1889–1943), Vico has developed the philosophical principles through which "he can deliver a counter-attack on the scientific and metaphysical philosophy of Cartesianism, demanding a broader basis for the theory of knowledge and criticizing the narrowness and abstractness of the prevailing philosophical creed" (1994: 71). This is briefly what Vico offers as opposed to the Cartesian theory of knowledge:

> The world of civil society has certainly been made by men, and that its principles are therefore to be found within the modifications of our own human mind. Whoever reflects on this cannot but marvel that the philosophers should have bent all their energies to the study of the world of nature, which, since God made it, He alone knows; and that they should have neglected the study of the world of nations or civil world, which, since men had made it, men could hope to know (Vico, 1948: 85).

Vico's methodology is theological in the sense that God is placed at the centre as the creator of the nature. It is only God that can have a complete mastery over nature and, thereby, complete understanding of it, not man. Therefore, natural scientists' claim to knowledge is unavailing. However, man can only have the knowledge of nations or civil world because he has made it. This is Vico's *verum factum* principle: "The *factum* (what man creates) was the *verum* (the true); or, in other words, human beings understood more profoundly that which they have made (*factum*) than that which they simply confront (divinely created nature)" (Breisach, 1994: 204). As history deals with nations or civil world made by man, the knowledge produced by history is much more reliable than the knowledge produced by natural sciences.

Vico proposes that "the nature of things is nothing but their coming into being (*nascimento*) at certain times and in certain fashions" (1948: 58). The existing modes or fashions in a certain period define the nature of things, and "the inseparable properties of things must be due to the mode or fashion in which they are born" (1948: 58). If the mode or the fashion of a certain period is revealed, and if these properties can be identified, then the nature of things can be clarified. With regard to this inference, Vico assigns his new "Science" the task of recovering "these grounds of truth which, in passage of years and the changes in languages and customs, has come down to us enveloped in falsehood" (1948: 58). As Hamilton also points out (2004: 36), Vico's

"master key" for his "Science" is the discovery of poetic nature and mythological sources of "the early gentile peoples" and this key is substantial for Vico "because with our civilized natures we cannot at all imagine and can only understand by great toil the poetic nature of these first men" (Vico, 1948: 19). While Vico takes poetry and mythological sources to the centre of his science, philology becomes crucially important for this approach according to him since "philosophy contemplates reason, whence comes knowledge of the true; philology observes the authority of human choice, whence comes consciousness of the certain" (1948:138). Even though Vico points out that civil world is knowable to man as he creates it, he casts doubts on the credibility of human mind: "Because of the indefinite nature of the human mind, whenever it is lost in ignorance man makes himself the measure of all things" (1948:54). As Collingwood also acknowledges (1994: 258), by stressing the fallibility of human mind, unreliable authority of human choice and constructed nature of civil world which includes law systems, institutions, politics and everything related to the civilized human life, Vico creates a science which is far ahead of his time.

Within this new "Science", Vico suggests a cyclical history in which every gentile nation passes through three phases; "the age of gods", "the age of heroes", "the age of men" (1948: 18). These phases describe the form of the governments of each phase as aristocracy, democracy and monarchy, respectively. Benedetto Croce (1866–1955) identifies a developmental process within these phases and spots in Vico's argument the idea that "no human age was in the wrong, for each had its own strength and beauty, and each was the effect of its predecessor and the necessary preparation for the one to follow" (1921: 269-270). Croce further remarks that "the conception of development" in the Romantic Age "broadened until it became a general conviction" which, then, became "the formative principle of the idealist philosophy, which culminated in the system of Hegel" (1921: 270). Hegel also perceives history as a dialectical progress towards a perfect State which delivers ultimate freedom to its citizens:

> It is only an inference from the history of the World, that its development has been a rational process; that the history in question has constituted the rational necessary course of the World Spirit that Spirit whose nature is always one and the same, but which unfolds this, its one nature in the phenomena of the World's existence. This must,

as before stated, present itself as the ultimate result of History. ... To him who looks upon the world rationally, the world in its turn, presents a rational aspect. The relation is mutual (1991: 24-25).

According to Hegel, the Spirit is the underlying principle which determines this rational process. In The Phenomenology of Spirit (1807), he attempts to clarify that "reason is Spirit when its certainty of being all reality has been raised to truth, and it is conscious of itself as its own world, and of the world as itself" (2004: 263). By reconciling history and reason, Hegel compromises history with the key principle of the Enlightenment. In Philosophy of History (1837), Hegel proposes that "the only Thought which Philosophy brings with it to the contemplation of History, is the simple conception of Reason; that Reason is the Sovereign of the World; that the history of the world therefore, presents us with a rational process" (1991: 22). That feature belongs to the type of history which Hegel names as philosophical history which "means nothing but *thoughtful consideration of it*" (1991: 22). Apart from philosophical history, Hegel identifies two other types of history; Original history which deals with "deeds, events, and states of society, which they had before their eyes, and whose spirit they shared" (1991: 14) and Reflective history which bears a mode of representation which "is not really confined by the limits of the time to which it relates, but whose spirit transcends the present" (1991: 17). Hegel champions philosophical history because he believes it is governed by Reason and tries to come to terms with Spirit. Nevertheless, he is well aware of the risk of bringing philosophy and history together because "philosophy dwells in the region of self-produced ideas, without reference to actuality" (1991: 22). The task of history, on the other hand, is "simply to adopt into its records what is and has been — actual occurrences and transactions" and this task seems to imply that Thought in history is inferior to "what is given, to the realities of fact" (1991: 22). It Hegel's schematization and subcategorization can be read as his attempts to accommodate history into the requirements of his age which favoured rational and scientific approach. Still, Hegel is well sure that philosophical history is superior to scientific history because:

Even the ordinary, the "impartial" historiographer, who believes and professes that he maintains a simply receptive attitude; surrendering himself only to the data supplied him — is by no means passive as regards the exercise of his thinking powers. He brings his categories with him, and sees the phenomena presented to his mental vision, exclusively

through these media. And, especially in all that pretends to the name of science, it is indispensable that Reason should not sleep — that reflection should be in full play (1991: 24).

It is suggested that the idea of the impartial and objective historiographer is an illusion since preconceived ideas interfere with the interpretation of the data. Thus, Hegel warns against the "professed historians" who have a tendency for faithful adoption since these historians inevitably filter the data using their "thinking powers" (1991: 24). Thus, Hegel problematizes the historian's claim to impartiality. This can be read as a reaction against his German contemporary historians led by Leopold Von Ranke (1795–1886) whose aim was to create a systematic scientific history. For George G. Iggers, "Ranke's conception of history as a rigorous science is characterized by the tension between the explicit demand for objective research, which strictly rejects all value judgments and metaphysical speculations, and the implicit philosophic and political assumptions that actually determine his research" (2005: 25). In his preface to the first edition of Histories of the Latin and Germanic Peoples (1824), Ranke makes it clear that "the function of judging the past, of instructing men for the profit of future years" is a "lofty undertaking" and his work only aspires to "show how it essentially was (wie es eigentlich gewesen)" (2011: 86). For this task, a historian should not "have preconceived ideas as does the philosopher" (2011: 6). Historical practice demands a "pure love of truth", "penetrating, profound study" of documentary, "a universal interest" and "impartiality" (2011: 12-13). By virtue of these features history can turn into a complete objective science which may also require a struggle against the claims of philosophy. Ranke's science "seeks to relate to the sublime" by discovering "a principle from which history would receive a unique life of its own" and hopefully would save itself from the dominion of philosophy "which has reached its result by way of speculation" (2011: 9). He, therefore, identifies an active principle in history opposing philosophy:

While the philosopher, viewing history from his vantage point, seeks infinity merely in progression, development, and totality, history recognizes something infinite in every existence: in every condition, in every being, something eternal, coming from God; and this is its vital principle. (2011: 11)

Ranke's ambitious scientific history, in this sense, challenges Hegelian philosophical history which is defined by the unfolding rational progress of Spirit and which moves towards individual with the hope of finding "infinite in every existence" (Ranke, 2011: 11). Concentrating on Ranke's theory, historians could finally establish their field as history gradually had taken part in academic circles in the twentieth-century.

Ranke and contemporaries literally dominated the historical practice in Europe with their scientific historiography in the first half of the twentieth century till the postmodern period. Because of the great importance given to the primary sources, historians frequented the archives. In E. H. Carr's words, "this was the age of innocence, and historians walked in the Garden of Eden, without a scrap of philosophy to cover them, naked and unashamed before the god of history" (1987: 20). Even though Ranke fought hard to establish scientific history, he still acknowledged the inevitable triad connection between history, philosophy and art. For Ranke, "history is distinguished from all other sciences in that it is also an art" (2011: 8). As a science proper, history collects data and requires artistic power for recreation:

> History is a science in collecting, finding, penetrating; it is an art because it recreates and portrays that which it has found and recognized. Other sciences are satisfied simply with recording what has been found; history requires the ability to recreate. ... As a science, history is related to philosophy, as an art, to poetry. The difference is that, in keeping with their nature, philosophy and poetry move within the realm of the ideal while history has to rely on reality (Ranke, 2011: 8).

The quotation above can be read as that while poetry and philosophy are located within the realm of imagination, history is situated in the domain of reality. History is associated with reality as it is the retelling of the real life events and this retelling requires recreation which links it with art. However, it is remarkable that Ranke, the founder of the scientific history, acknowledges that history and poetry (fiction) are related. History recreates what it finds and uses the power of poetry (fiction) in this recreation. On the other hand, Ranke's history has to do with reality. However, the notion of reality itself and representation of reality will be scrutinized and problematized by the postmodern philosophers.

Another school of historiography developed along with scientific History in the twentieth century was Marxist historiography which takes its basic premises from the writings of Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895). Marx did not write directly about history, but his works, especially The German Ideology (1846), introduce sufficient ideas to form a historical school which was called historical materialism and which took a stand against German idealism. For Marx "innocent and childlike fancies are the kernel of the modern Young-Hegelian philosophy", and he suggested liberating men "from chimeras, the ideas, dogmas, imaginary beings under the yoke of which they are pinning away" (2000: 176). Marx took material conditions as the basic agent designing not only men's physical world but also his consciousness. Unlike the Hegelian philosophy of history, the Marxist historical materialism accepts material and physiological needs as the preliminary determining factors of world history:

> We must begin by stating the first premise of all human existence and, therefore, of all history, the premise, namely, that men must be in a position to live in order to be able to "make history". But life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself (Marx, 2000: 181).

Satisfaction of a need leads to new needs, and these new needs give shape to the productive forces which are crucially important in Marxist understanding. "The multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society, hence, that the 'history of humanity' must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange" (Marx, 2000: 183). In this sense, Marxist historiography differentiates historical periods in terms of modes of production. In The Communist Manifesto (1848), Marx divides human history into three as ancient society, feudal society and capitalist society. Succession of stages takes place through dialectics and each stage includes a dominant class and one other class that would succeed the former. Marx anticipates that the proletariat will eventually dethrone bourgeoisie, the ruling class of capitalist society, and classless socialist society will be established. Although the credibility of Marxist historiography has diminished with the failure of 1917 Soviet revolution and the collapse of the Soviet Union, ideas of Marx has been

influential throughout the twentieth century best embodied in the works of Marxist historians.

The idea of progressive history prompted by Hegelian idealist philosophy and Marxist historical materialism has been challenged in the postmodern period. According to Jean-François Lyotard (1924–1998), it is now impossible to "have recourse to the grand narratives – we can resort neither to the dialectic of Spirit nor even to the emancipation of humanity as a validation for the postmodern scientific discourse" (1984: 60). Jean Baudrillard (1929–2007), on the other hand, advocates the abolition of history: "It is precisely in history that we are alienated, and if we leave history we also leave alienation (not without nostalgia, it must be said, for that good old drama of subject and object)" (qtd. in Sim, 2000: 24). In The Illusion of the End (1992), Baudrillard asserts the impossibility of writing history because of both acceleration and deceleration of life. According to him, with the advent of computerized technology telling history becomes impossible because "no human language can withstand the speed of light" and hence "no history can withstand the centrifugation of fact or their being short-circuited in real time" (1994a: 1). When it comes to deceleration of life:

> History comes to an end here, not for want of actors, nor for want of violence (there will always be more events, thanks to be to the media and the news networks!), but by deceleration, indifference and stupefaction. It is no longer able to transcend itself, to envisage its own finality, to dream of its own end; it is being buried beneath its own immediate effect, worn out in special effects, imploding into current events (1994: 2).

These narratives have no power anymore to legitimize or compel a consensus since society has already been fragmented as "totality of life" has been "splintered into independent specialties which were left to the narrow competence of experts" with the institutionalization of morality, art and science (Lyotard, 1984: 72). Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, in The Postmodern Turn, stress the importance of the 1960s as the turning point towards postmodernism expressing that "there was a turn away from modern discourse of truth, certainty, universality, essence and system and a rejection of grand historical narratives of liberation and revolution" (1997: 7). The 1960s provided for a group of intellectuals, including Foucault, Derrida and Lyotard, an experience "what they believed to be a decisive break with modern society and culture" which caused the replacement of "core tenets of modern theory with strong emphases on

difference and multiplicity themes, later advocated by postmodern theorists" (Best and Kellner: 1997, 4-5). This mood of change, dissolution of old paradigms of modernism, hand in hand with the social and political turmoil of the 1960s which would later create new forms of culture, society and technology gave way to the production of the postmodern condition.

Disbelief in totalizing and grand narratives is one of the prominent features of the postmodern condition. This is implied in Sarup's statements that "the decline of the unifying and legitimating power of the grand narratives of speculation and emancipation can be seen as an effect of the blossoming of techniques and technologies since the Second World War, which has shifted emphasis from the ends of action to its means" (1988: 123). Similarly, the means used in historiography has become the focus in postmodern discussions of history. Even though Baudrillard implies the rejection of history as a totalizing process of grand narratives, he nonetheless suggests a new type of history: anagrammatic history which includes poetic devices in it:

> Might we not transpose language games on to social and historical phenomena: anagrams, acrostics, spoonerisms, rhyme, strophe and catastrophe? … Are there social spoonerisms, or an anagrammatic history …, rhyming forms of political action or events which can be read in either direction? … And the anagram, that detailed process of unravelling, that sort of poetic and non-linear convulsion of language – is there a chance that history lends itself to such a poetic convulsion. … Such would be the enchanted alternative to the linearity of history, the poetic alternative to the disenchanted confusion, the chaotic profusion of present events. In this very way, we enter, beyond history, upon pure fiction, upon the illusion of the world (1994a: 122).

It is thus suggested that history can overcome the chaotic state of the postmodern world only by resorting to a poetic and/or literary alternative which entails fictionalization. Therefore, postmodernism brings together literature and history despite the latter's previous claims to objectivity and scientific nature and, then comes up with a textual approach to history. The basic principle of the approach is that the past can only be revealed in the present through its textual traces. In On What is History, Keith Jenkins asserts that postmodernists do not "deny the material existence of the past or the present" but there is "a strong insistence that that once actual past is only accessible to us through texts and thus as a 'reading'" (2005: 29). The issue of presentism also creates a conflict between the traditional historians and the postmodernist historians;

for the former, being placed at the present is a problem that the historian should overcome while for the latter "the historian's placement in the present is an issue to be registered, perhaps even celebrated" (Clark, 2004: 19). The reason that traditional historians reject presentism is the fear that it threatens objectivity and entails a history driven by ideology and self-interest. However, the postmodernist historians insist that presentism has always been with historiography as every individual historian has a social positioning.

The postmodernist historians also challenge the idea of the disinterested history free of interpretation. According to Jenkins, "in the end history is theory and theory is ideological and ideology just is material interests" (2003: 24). This implies, then, refusal of objectivity and acknowledgement of relativity. History becomes an ideological construct to which the dominant or the ruling ideology gives shape; power relationships determine what is to include and exclude. In his preface to the first edition of Histories of the Latin and Germanic Peoples, Ranke states that "intention of a historian depends on his viewpoint" and announces that he "remains close to home with the tribally related peoples of either purely Germanic or Germano- Latin origin, whose history is the nucleus of all recent history" (2011: 85). At the very beginning Ranke identifies his inclusions and exclusions proving Jenkins' point when he suggests that "history is never for itself; it is always for someone" (2003: 24). Therefore, it can be argued that Ranke's histories may be concentrated on the white, male Western European while the postmodernist historians have produced histories for the previously excluded. For Iain Chambers, historiography till postmodernism had functioned as a European text:

> Historiography did not merely study the past: it registered, transmitted and translated it. Its truth was the faith and mission of the West. So, the recent irruption of others into the heartland of Europeans *savoir* poses disturbing questions about the status of *our* knowledge and the particular protocols of historiography. For this intrusion rewrites the conditions of the West: its sense of truth, its sense of time, its sense of being (1997: 125).

The foci point of the historical accounts prior to the postmodernist decentring had always been the West. Those accounts had been written by the West within Western perspective introducing their truth as the universal truth. Europeans believed

they were “the subjects of the modern episteme” who only could produce “universal knowledge”. By inventing myths and traditions they defined national identities while they “became the universal ‘we’ – able to grant and withdraw history from others” (Chambers, 1997: 125). In this context, Jenkins replaces the question “what is history?” with “who is history for?” and, by this way, history becomes “collective autobiographies” in which “people(s) create, in part, their identities” (2003: 22, 23). In other words, history becomes a discourse in which nations construct their national identities by moulding the past into a certain form that functions as the base of that construction.

It can be argued, then, the past is not a fixed object, it is rather unstable as the people and the nations produce different versions of the same past. According to Gertrude Himmelfarb, postmodernism amounts to “a denial of the fixity of the past, of the reality of the past apart from what the historian chooses to make of it, and thus of any objective truth about the past” (1997: 158). Then, what is the governing principle in postmodernist history? Himmelfarb replies that postmodernist history “recognizes no reality principle, only the pleasure principle – history at the pleasure of the historian” (1997: 159). History becomes the discourse of the historian; rather than a scientific, disinterested and impartial endeavour, it is now described as an interpretive and imaginary textual construction.

In the second half of the twentieth century, seeing the failure of history that aspires to be disinterested and scientific, some historians like Arthur Danto and Lawrence Stone turned to narrative history (Clark, 2004: 86). Narrative history points out that history is about the past and that historians create stories to communicate this past. History includes a narrative character and “it would not be history if there were no connection to the basic human ability to follow a story” (Clark, 2004: 90). However, in “The Discourse of History”, Roland Barthes asserts that narrative structure “was originally developed within the cauldron of fiction (in myths and the first epics)” (1981: 18). The historian collects data or relater of signifiers and “organizes them with the purpose of establishing positive meaning and filling the vacuum of pure, meaningless series” (1981: 16). Barthes concludes that the historical discourse “is in its essence a form of ideological elaboration, or to put it more precisely, an *imaginary*

elaboration" (1981: 16). In other words, revival of narrative history has contributed to the blurring of the line that separates history and fiction.

Accepting that the act of writing history includes imaginary faculties necessarily entails merging of history and literature. According to Linda Hutcheon, in the postmodern period, history and fiction are both "identified as linguistic constructs, highly conventionalized in their narrative forms, and not at all transparent either in terms of language or structure" (1995: 105). While history is conventionally assumed to refer to the actual world, the fiction is associated with the imaginary, fictive universe. However, the postmodern theories stress that "history becomes a text, a discursive construct upon which fiction draws as easily as it does upon other texts of literature" (Hutcheon, 1995: 142). Both history and fiction are proposed as discourses and "both constitute systems of signification by which we make sense of the past" (Hutcheon, 1995: 89). From this statement, the basic premise of the postmodern historiography is deduced; "the meaning and shape are not in the events, but in the systems which make those past 'events' into present historical 'facts'" (Hutcheon, 1995: 89). Therefore, the meaning is sought in the systems which are responsible for the validity of the historical facts. In parallel with this, in Metahistory, Hayden White analyses historical works using literary tropes. White's metahistory refutes the idea that history is science, and perceives history rather as an art. For him, the historical work is "a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse" (1975: ix). This narrative structure presents "a certain amount of data" and makes use of "theoretical concepts for explaining these data" (1975: ix). The content of this structure "is generally poetic, and specifically linguistic" (1975: ix). White sets out to "establish the uniquely *poetic* elements in historiography" to identify and interpret "the main forms of historical consciousness" (1975: x). For this reason, he constructs a complex pattern:

> I distinguish among three kinds of strategy that can be used by historians to gain different kinds of 'explanatory affect'. I call these different strategies explanation by formal argument, explanation by emplotment, and explanation by ideological implication. Within each of these different strategies I identify four possible modes of articulation ... For arguments these are the modes of Formism, Organicism, Mechanism, and Contextualism, for emplotments there are the archetypes of Romance, Comedy, Tragedy, and Satire; and for ideological implication there are the tactics of Anarchism, Conservatism, Radicalism, and Liberalism. A specific combination of modes comprises

what I call the historiographical style of a particular historian or philosopher of history (1975: x).

This complex pattern implies that there is a strong connection between history and literature. Moreover, every work of history includes its metahistory through which a literary analysis can be conducted. In The Content of the Form, White stresses the function of ideology at work in historical work. Ideology becomes a process:

> ... by which different kinds of meaning are produced and reproduced by the establishment of a mental set towards the world in which certain sign systems are privileged as necessary, even natural, ways of recognizing a 'meaning' in things and others are suppressed, ignored, or hidden in the very process of representing a world to consciousness (1990: 192).

It can be argued that texts may offer different readings in accordance with the ideological positioning of the both historian and the reader. The idea that history is constitutive of narrative discourses, the obvious stress on its linguistic nature and ideological positioning challenge the monolithic knowledge of the past which, then, implies the possibility of construction of alternative accounts of the past. In The Archaeology of Knowledge, Foucault also rejects the credibility of monolithic knowledge of the past claiming that in postmodern condition "the history of thought, of knowledge, of philosophy, of literature seems to be seeking, and discovering, more and more discontinuities" which he sums as "the questioning of the document" (2002: 6). Foucault perceives history as a form of power which manipulates the perception of the past. This indicates intricate sets of relations in the construction of history which also paves the way for multiple accounts of a given period. Rather than introducing a monolithic account of a historical period, Foucault argues that a historiography should seek for:

> ... several pasts, several forms of connexion, several hierarchies of importance, several networks of determination, several teleologies, for one and the same science, as its present undergoes change: thus historical descriptions are necessarily ordered by the present state of knowledge, they increase with every transformation and never cease, in turn, to break with themselves (2002: 5).

The interpretation of the past within the present state of knowledge necessarily will reveal different versions of the past from the previous or future states of

knowledge. History, then, is recognised to be little more than a discursive practice in the postmodern age. The discursive nature of history indicates its inevitable ideological positioning due to ideological situatedness of both the historian and the historical trace or the documents on which the historical discourse is established. The historical trace, on the other hand, becomes a social construct, or a postmodern signifier, which does not carry meaning but on which meanings are imposed by an ideologically situated historian whose discourse is shaped by the complicated sets of power relations. Hutcheon asserts that, "historiographic metafiction", a term which denotes a certain strand of postmodern fiction concerned with narration of the past, "self-consciously reminds us that, while events did occur in the real empirical past, we name and constitute those events as historical facts by selection and narrative positioning" (1995: 97). Therefore, instead of logocentric and linear narration of the past, postmodern historiographic metafiction questions the authentic historical knowledge and methods of relating it through contradictions, discontinuities, gaps and ruptures. The local and the provisional replace the universal and the transcendent. Postmodern historiographic metafiction introduces pluralized pasts which differ according to the positions taken by the unreliable narrators whose ideological agendas shape their discourses. Therefore, every account of a given period remains impartial, inadequate, limited and constrained.

1.2. The Postmodern Historical Novel

1.2.1 Origins of the Historical Novel

Boundaries that separate history and literature have always remained fragile and flexible since the antiquity. Even though the nineteenth century historians, led by Ranke, attempted to detach history from literature and construct an objective and scientific discipline, post-structuralist tendencies emerged in the second half of the twentieth century removed the boundaries and took history back to fictional realm side by side with literature. It was suggested that both literature and history are textual practices constructed on the basis of time and space using the same tool, language. They are both comprised of narrative units which inevitably imply the existence of a selective narrator and inclusions/exclusions. While history has taken literary texts as possible

sources of information, historical events have always functioned as an important subject matter for literature.

As its name also suggests, the historical novel is one of the closest points where history and literature meet. While it is true that literary works had had a close affinity with historical events and had attempted to retell the past, for many critics, the historical novel proper started with Sir Walter Scott's Waverley novels (Lukács, 1989: 19; de Groot, 2010: 17). De Groot defines the genre as "a knotty one to pin down" which includes "multiplicity of different types of fictional formats" like romance, detective, horror, postmodern, fantasy and so on (2010: 3). The most commonly shared tag of the genre is "the intergeneric hybridity and flexibility" bestowing a greater space for literary experiments (de Groot, 2010: 2). Beginning from Scott to his postmodern descendants, the genre has provided the novelists with sufficient and ever changing thematic and formal resources:

> A historical novel might consider the articulation of nationhood via the past, highlight the subjectivism of narratives of History, underline the importance of the realist mode of writing to notions of authenticity, question writing itself, and attack historiographical convention. (de Groot, 2010: 2)

Writing in the twenty-first century, de Groot's account of the genre inevitably includes postmodern features like subjective narration and metafictional gestures. Almost seventy years before de Groot, Georg Lukács composed his theory on the historical novel which has become the most influential critical source since then. A Marxist, Lukács cites social forces at work in the nineteenth century setting the ground for a new historical understanding and ultimately giving birth to the historical novel: "It was the French Revolution, the revolutionary wars and the rise and fall of Napoleaon, which for the first time made history a *mass experience*, and moreover on a European scale" (Lukács, 1989: 23). These upheavals did not take place in the closed fortresses but experienced by all layers of each European nation which created "concrete possibilities for men to comprehend their own existence as something historically conditioned, for them to see in history something which deeply affects their daily lives and immediately concerns them" (Lukács, 1989: 24). As the culmination of the bourgeois revolution, nationhood became the banner uniting the social strata, from

peasantry to petty bourgeois, which required "a re-awakening of national history, with memories of the past, of past greatness, of moments of national dishonour" (Lukács, 1989: 25). However, for Lukács, "the Enlightenment's conception of man's unalterable nature" was a great obstacle impeding the way for proper understanding of historicism and this obstacle was surpassed by the philosophy of Hegel which "sees a process in history ... propelled, on the one hand, by the inner motives forces of history and which, on the other, extends its influence to all the phenomena of human life, including thought" (1989: 29). Social forces shaped by the upheavals of post revolution period taught man his historical nature which was not stable but in perpetual dialectical progress within a national tag.

This is the historical basis that Lukács constructs for the emergence of the historical novel first initiated by Scott. For Lukács, the historical novels preceding Scott, like Walpole's Castle of Otranto, "are historical only as regards their purely external choice of theme and costume" and they lack "the specifically historical, that is, derivation of individuality of characters from the historical peculiarity of their age" (1989: 19). Scott's historical novels, however, are the result of the historical understanding developed in the period:

> What matters therefore in the historical novel is not the retelling of great historical events, but the poetic awakening of the people who figured in those events. What matters is that we should re-experience the social and human motives which led men to think, feel and act just as they did in historical reality. ... In order to bring out these social and human motives of behaviour, the outwardly insignificant events, the smaller (from without) relationships are better suited than the great monumental dramas of world history (Lukács, 1989: 42).

The historical novel is not simply an account in which only the past events are retold; this account should also reflect social dynamics active in that period. What is important is the introduction of social forces which make certain characters act in a certain way. In other words, a historical novel proper should provide insights concerning the motivation of a character's attitude and demeanour. If required for achieving historical reality, insignificant events should be preferred to great historical events and thereby, the problem of romanticizing historical figures can be overcome. Lukács believes this is Scott's success in characterization:

> By renewing the old laws of epic poetry in his original way Scott discovers the only possible means whereby the historical novel can reflect historical reality adequately, without either romantically monumentalizing the important figures or dragging them down to the level of private, psychological trivia (Lukács 1989: 47).

For Lukács, Scott manages to individualize historical figures in a certain fashion by which "purely individual traits of character ... are brought into a very complex, very live relationship with the age in which they live" enabling to represent "simultaneously the historical necessity and the individual role which he plays in history" (1989: 47). Lukács celebrates Scott's historical novels as the characters are embedded in historical progress and they are portrayed with regard to the historical necessity. By not featuring romanticized figures but realist portrayals, Scott's novels make it easier for readers to empathise with the characters within their own historical positions. In this sense, in the nineteenth century, Scott was influential not only among his fellow countryman like Charles Dickens and George Eliot, but all over Europe, from Flaubert to Tolstoy.

1.2.2. Modernism and the Historical Novel

In the first half of the twentieth century, the historical novel was believed to have exhausted itself under the shadow of the complex texts of the modernist novelists and turned into a marginal and "prevalent sub-genre" (de Groot, 2010: 45). The Modernist novelists tried to create an order that they believed lacking in the modern world. In a world disordered and crisis ridden, they sought to create order in their work to set "form over life, pattern and myth over the contingencies of history" (Bradbury and Fletcher, 1991: 394). This search for order or aesthetic wholeness required discarding of the techniques of the previous period and creating fresh ones in order to depict the modern world. The conventions of the Realist fiction had to be given away due to the changes in the conception of reality. The real of the twentieth century was not the real of its predecessors. The Modernist novelists had a developed sense that reality is not reality as perceived and structured by the Western Bourgeois consciousness. The real was not one-dimensional but multi-dimensional behind which "lies a realm full of dynamic energies whose patterns are alien to liberal humanist or classical notions of

order" (Sheppard, 1993: 17). The Modernist novelists rather focused on the individual and they reflected the disturbed consciousness of that individual not by situating him in the historical progress but by concentrating on the momentary details using the technique of the stream of consciousness.

Having escaped from the conventions of story-telling and fact-giving, thus, the Modernist novel, freed itself from its dependence on the material world, was now able to "probe more freely and intensely the fact of life and the orders of modern consciousness" (Bradbury and Fletcher, 1991: 408). This was not the consciousness of a stereo-typed, fixed and established subject of the Western bourgeois culture epitomized in the realist novels of the nineteenth century, but the split consciousness of the modern individual like Septimus in Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway. To articulate the varied meta-worlds of the distorted modern individual, the Modernist novelists broke the linear sequentiality, destroyed the omniscient and reliable narrators, disturbed conventionally fixed modes of narrative relations through which their nineteenth-century predecessors comfortably had communicated their stable and secure world. Thus, quintessentially, the Modernist novelists experimented with techniques including distortions of linear casual/temporal order; they employed narrators whose perspective is limited, peculiar or unreliable; using multi-perspectivism they created polyphonic novels; established elastic or elusive relationships between author, narrator and protagonist (Sheppard, 1993: 18). The distortion of linear temporal order was due to the fact that the Modernist novelist's sense of time was different from his nineteenth-century predecessors. For a novelist of the nineteenth century, time was progressive and linear, flowing in dialectical manner. This sense of time was devastated with the Modernist sense of apocalypse, flux and decentring and the time, for the Modernist novelists, "ceases to be a regular and common-sense process in which a precise but fixed gap, the present, separates the past from the future - a kind of simultaneity in which past, present and future merges into one" (Sheppard, 1993: 29). Thus, the Modernist novelists gave up chronological plot construction; instead, they disturbed the sequence of the events constantly by shifts of time either from the present to the future or from the present to the past. De Groot cites Woolf's Orlando as the best embodiment of treatment of history by a modernist novel:

> The novel quite consciously fractures historicity, attacking patriarchal modes of knowing and being in order to suggest alternative, fluid knowledges and identities. *Orlando* challenges hierarchies and gendered norms, subverting ordering narratives to present a space of flux and possibility… In particular, *Orlando* undermines the historical novel, queering it in order to upset the rational realism of the form and to bend it as far out of shape as possible. This was, as she argued, in order to avoid the dullness of convention and to try to describe the world in better detail (2010: 43).

As the Modernist novels concentrated on the present rather than the past, the novel ignored history and "became increasingly baroque in its attempts to explore and explain contemporary experience" (de Groot, 2010: 44). This trend had been dominant in the first half of the twentieth century, from the high-modernist Joyce to the late-modernists Kafka and Beckett, in Hutcheon's categorization (1995:108). This is why in Marxist Literary Criticism, Terry Eagleton attacks both the high and the late-modernists since in their "alienated" novels both "man is stripped of his history and has no reality beyond the self" and "history becomes pointless or cyclical, dwindled to mere duration" (2002: 32). The realist writer, on the other hand, can link "the individual to the social whole, and [inform] each particular of social life with the power of the 'world-historical' – the significant movements of history itself" (Eagleton, 2002: 27-28). The negative appreciation of the Modernist novels is due to the great concern for formal innovation and stylistic and technical experiment highlighting aesthetic nature of the novel at the expense of its social function.

1.2.3 Postmodern Historiographic Metafiction

Marxists have also been critical of postmodern literature in terms of history. Fredric Jameson, who composed the most notable critique against postmodernism, proposed that "constitutive features of the postmodern" are "a new depthlessness" and "a consequent weakening of historicity, both in our relationship to public History and in the new forms of our temporality" (1992: 6). For Jameson, one of the defining themes of postmodernism is "namely the disappearance of a sense of history, the way in which our entire contemporary social system has little by little begun to lose its capacity to retain its own past, has begun to live in a perpetual present and in a perpetual change" (1992: 179). Linda Hutcheon takes a stand against the accusations of Jameson in her A

Poetics of Postmodernism. She approves that postmodernism denies the possibility of achieving "genuine historicity" which, however, should not be assumed as "naive" refusal:

> What postmodernism does is to contest the very possibility of our ever being able to know the "ultimate objects" of the past. It teaches and enacts the recognition of the fact that the social, historical, and existential "reality" of the past is discursive reality when it is used as the referent of art, and so the only "genuine historicity" becomes that which would openly acknowledge its own discursive, contingent identity (1995: 23).

What is challenged is the belief in totalitarian and encompassing historical approach. The genuine historicity requires both awareness of the possibility of different versions and self-awareness for the contingency of the produced historical knowledge. It is therefore, the postmodernist approach to history neither is nostalgic nor aims for "aesthetic cannibalization" (Hutcheon, 1995: 24). It is neither naive refusal nor innocent acceptance, but an intentional questioning of the received historical facts which does not only include problematizing those facts but also laying bare the means by which facts are constructed and then related. In this sense, postmodernism is not ahistorical but has developed a new way "to think historically" which means "to think critically and contextually" (Hutcheon, 1995: 88). Postmodern fiction's concern with history may seem like a return to Realism in fiction, but postmodern fiction, or historiographic metafiction, problematizes history in order to question the relationship between history and reality, then between reality and language.

> In challenging the seamless quality of the history/ fiction (or world/ art) join implied by realist narrative, postmodern fiction does not, however, disconnect itself from history or the world. It foregrounds and thus contests the conventionality and unacknowledged ideology of that assumption of seamlessness and asks its readers to question the processes by which we represent our selves and our world to ourselves and to become aware of the means by which we make sense of and construct order out of experience in our particular culture (Hutcheon, 2002:51).

It can be argued that while the high degree of self-awareness, common in postmodern fiction, lays bare the artificiality of the fictional text and its processes of creating a version of reality, it also challenges the reader to question how he produces his own reality. Fiction cannot reflect or reproduce the reality, but can only introduce a version of that reality. "Instead, fiction is offered as another of the discourses by which

we construct our versions of reality, and both construction and the need for it are what are foregrounded in the post-modernist novel" (Hutcheon, 1995: 40). In other words, fiction itself becomes a discourse which includes interdependent historical, social, aesthetic and ideological contexts. Through this re-contextualization of fiction the entire act of communication including the enunciating entity (narrator/author) and receptor (reader) gains importance described by Hutcheon as "the revenge of *parole*" over langue (1995: 82). Through this emphasis on the context, language becomes a tool that has the potential to produce multiple meanings depending not only on the context of the text but also on the contexts of the author and the reader. In parallel with this, Roland Barthes, in "The Death of the Author", challenges the notion of the originating author who provides a fixed meaning. According to Barthes, "linguistically, the author is never more than the instance writing, just as I is nothing other than the instance saying I" (2001: 1467). The subject of the langue is "empty outside of the very enunciation which defines it, suffices to make language 'hold together'" (Barthes, 2001: 1467). Then, it can be argued that it is the reader who activates the meaning of the text. Otherwise, if the meaning was acquired merely through the author, it would necessarily mean "to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing" (Barthes, 2001: 1469). Hutcheon, however, does not overlook the process of production while stressing the role of the receiver because the process of production itself is encoded in the act of enunciation. The originating, authorial author may be destroyed, but "simultaneous with a general dethroning of suspect authority and of centred and totalized thought, we are witnessing a renewed aesthetic and theoretical interest in the interactive powers involved in the production and reception of texts" (Hutcheon, 1995: 77). In other words, an analysis of a postmodernist fiction requires incorporation of both process of production and the moment of reception. Interactively each should be considered because the acts of enunciation and reception create different contextual meanings.

Apparent visibility of the author in the postmodern texts introduces an additional layer for contextual meaning. The existence of the author in the fictive universe side by side with fictional characters does not only increase metafictional quality of the text but also problematizes ontologies of those characters as the author himself occupies an ontology within the same text. By making use of Bakhtin's term

"dominant", Brian McHale posits that the dominant of the modernist fiction is epistemological – since this fiction asks questions like "Which world is this?" or "What is to be done in it?" – while the dominant of postmodern fiction is ontological addressing questions like "What is a world?; What kinds of world are there, how are they constituted, and how do they differ?; What happens when different kinds of worlds are violated?" (McHale, 1987: 10) For McHale, an ontology may be a description of any universe, or potentially plurality of universes not *the* universe (McHale, 1987: 27). Recalling the old analogy between the author and god, in which the author had to suppress himself backward for the sake of the validity of the created universe, McHale asserts that the postmodernist author "now makes his freedom visible by thrusting himself into the foreground of his work" (McHale, 1987: 30). It is fair to say that the visible stance of the postmodernist author in the text is closely associated with the self-reflexive nature of postmodern fiction.

Through his appearance, the postmodernist author draws attention to the artificial nature of the text. It is, therefore, postmodern fiction is often associated with metafiction by critics. For instance, Patricia Waugh asserts that "nearly all contemporary experimental writing displays some explicitly metafictional strategies" (1984: 22). Accepting that metafiction is as old as novel itself, Waugh believes that as the writers have become more and more aware of theoretical issues by exploring "a theory of fiction through the practice of writing", they have produced novels which "embody dimensions of self-reflexivity and formal uncertainty" (1984: 2) Framing, Waugh suggests, is an important issue in metafiction as it suggests where the real world finishes and the fiction starts. According to Waugh, contemporary metafiction poses problems concerning the frame-breaking as it examines the construction of the frame that separates the real world from fiction. For Waugh, "contemporary metafiction draws attention to the fact that life, as well as novels, is constructed through frames, and that it is finally impossible to know where one frame ends and another begins" (1984: 29). Thus, postmodern metafictions disturb conventional beginnings and endings, or they present readers novels in the form of Chinese boxes or stories in stories. The ontological levels of fiction constantly shift, replace or overlap. Waugh again points out that this frame-breaking does not merely belong to postmodern fiction. She refers to George Eliot's Adam Bede as an example of frame-breaking in previous

literary epochs. However, George Eliot's breaking of the illusion aims to give moralistic commentary or interpretation. The disturbance of the illusion in the case of George Eliot is in fact to "*reinforce* the connection between the real and the fictional world, reinforce the reader's sense that one is a continuation of the other" (Waugh, 1984: 32). On the other hand, in the postmodernist metafictions, these intrusions work to "expose the ontological distinctness of the real and the fictional world, expose the literary conventions that disguise this distinctness" (Waugh, 1984: 32). The metafictional quality of postmodern fiction is put to use by the postmodernist authors to stress the uneasy relationship between fact and fiction. By constantly blurring the border which separates fact and fiction, the reader is thrust into a maze where he struggles to discover where the fact stops and the fiction starts.

Rather than creating an illusion of reality, postmodern fiction consciously defamiliarizes the reader through metafictional gestures which remove the line between fact and fiction. In this sense, Hutcheon suggests that "there are many parallels between the processes of history writing and fiction-writing" and mimetic representation is the most problematic among them (2002: 56). It can be argued that postmodernism highlights the constructed nature of facts, and historical facts are more vulnerable to such criticism as the past is only accessible in textual traces which are merely representations. What the historical narrative does is to construct the historical facts selectively out of these representations. "All past 'events' are potential historical 'facts,' but the ones that become facts are those that are chosen to be narrated" (Hutcheon, 2002: 72). Historical facts are not given but constructed, or processed, within inevitably partial narrative representation of the historian. Historiographic metafiction underlines that "like fiction, history constructs its object, that events named become facts" (Hutcheon, 2002: 75). According to Gertrude Himmelfarb, the postmodernist imagination is "liberated from the delusion of "fact fetishism" and persuaded of the "fictive nature of all history, that creative interpretation may take the form of fictional history" (1997: 164-165). As postmodernism denies the possibility to reach an absolute or total truth, this also entails the acknowledgement that "*all* history is fatally flawed" since there are only "contingent truths" (Himmelfarb, 1997: 165). In other words, the postmodernist thought unseats history and locates it into the realm of the fiction:

> It is only when history itself is "problematized" and "deconstructed", when events and persons are transformed into "texts," the past is deprived of any reality and history of any truth, that the distinction between history and fiction is elided and fictional history becomes a form of history rather than fiction. History itself, all of history, is then seen as existing in a continuum with fiction, as essentially fictional. (Himmelfarb, 1997: 165)

By giving credit to Hutcheon, Himmelfarb redefines White's metahistory as "historiographic metafiction" (1997: 165). White suggests that the traditional distinction between fiction and history "must give place to the recognition that we can only know the *actual* by contrasting it with or likening it to the *imaginable*" (1978: 98) because historical records are "always incomplete" (1978: 82). Using "emplotment", which White describes as "simply the encodation of the facts", historians make plausible stories out of chronicles. Therefore, historical narratives are "verbal fiction, the contents of which are as much *invented* as *found* and the forms of which have more in common with their counterparts in literature than they have with those in the sciences" (1978: 82). In this story making, "given set of casually recorded historical events" are pure "story *elements*" which are "*made* into a story by the suppression or subordination of certain of them and the highlighting of others" (1978: 84). These statements imply a highly subjective and relativist historiography which thoroughly depends on historian's ideological position in the course of suppression or subordination of certain historical records:

> How a given historical situation is to be configured depends on the historian's subtlety in matching up a specific plot structure with the set of historical events that he wishes to endow with a meaning of particular kind. This is essentially a literary, that is to say fiction-making operation. And to call it that in no way detracts from the status of historical narratives as providing a kind of knowledge (1978: 85).

Similarly, Hutcheon proposes that historiographic metafiction "installs and then blurs the line between fiction and history" (Hutcheon, 1995: 113). Unlike the historical fiction, the historiographic metafiction by playing "upon the truth and lies of the historical record" self consciously falsifies "certain known historical details" as it aims to "foreground the possible mnemonic failure" (Hutcheon, 1995: 114). Again, contrary to the historical fiction, which "incorporates and assimilates" historical data as a means to lend credibility to the fictional world, the historiographic metafiction foregrounds

especially "the process of *attempting* to assimilate" these data (Hutcheon, 1995: 114). It can be suggested that by laying bare this process, the historiographic metafiction problematizes the authenticity of any kind of historical representation which has claim to objectivity. Historical representation is inherently subjective in which the historical data is assimilated by an ideologically situated historian. Hutcheon believes that "one of the postmodern ways of literally incorporating the textualized past into the text of the present is that of parody" (1995: 118). Postmodern fiction, according to Hutcheon, in ironic and parodic ways uses and abuses or installs and subverts conventions "self-consciously pointing both to their own inherent paradoxes and provisionality and, of course, to their critical or ironic re-reading of the art of the past" (1995: 23). In other words, postmodernist fiction first accommodates and then undermines its target. Therefore, parody and postmodern fiction frequently go hand in hand as both of them simultaneously aim to accommodate then to subvert. Thus, for Hutcheon, "parody is a perfect postmodernist form in some senses, for it paradoxically both incorporates and challenges that which it parodies" (1987: 17). However, Jameson insists that parody is impossible in the postmodern age:

> Supposing that modern art and modernism – far from being a kind of specialized aesthetic curiosity – actually anticipated social developments along these lines; supposing that in the decades since the emergence of the great modern styles society has itself begun to fragment in this way, each group coming to speak a curious private language of its own, each profession developing its private code or idiolect, and finally each individual coming to be a kind of linguistic island, separated from everyone else? But then in that case, the very possibility of any linguistic norm in terms of which one could ridicule private languages and idiosyncratic styles would vanish, and we would have nothing but stylistic diversity and heterogeneity (Jameson, 1992: 167).

Instead of parody, Jameson believes, pastiche is one of the most prominent features of postmodernism. Pastiche is similar to parody, it is also an imitation of a particular style. However, according to Jameson, pastiche "is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without parody's ulterior motive, without the satirical impulse, without laughter, without that still latent feeling that there exists something normal compared to which what is being imitated is rather comic" (Jameson, 1992: 167). Jameson states that it will be impossible for the present day artists to create new style since they have already been invented. Moreover, if the individual subject is considered to be a myth that has never really existed, it is equally impossible to talk about peculiar individual

style to parody. This loss of original style, Jameson thinks, is the imprisonment of the text in the past. On the other hand, contradicting Jameson, Hutcheon puts forward that this loss is an emancipatory challenge of the postmodernist artist to redefine "subjectivity and creativity that has ignored the role of history in art and thought" (1987: 17). Moreover, the postmodern parody, Hutcheon underlines, also becomes the mode of the ex-centric, who had been previously excluded by a dominant ideology, because parody introduces "a perspective on the present and the past which allows an artist to speak *to* a discourse from *within* it, but without being totally recuperated by it" (1995: 35). Reminding Brecht's alienation effect and Shklovsky's term "defamiliarization," parody "works to distance and, at the same time, to involve both artist and audience in a participatory hermeneutic activity" through "dialogical relation between identification and distance" (Hutcheon: 1995, 35). In Hutcheon's terms, postmodern parody does not necessarily aim to destroy the past, neither it neglects the context of the past. Rather postmodern parody is used "both to enshrine the past and to question it" (Hutcheon, 1995: 126). In the case of historiographic metafiction, "postmodern parody is a kind of contesting revision or rereading of the past that both confirms and subverts the power of the representations of history" (Hutcheon, 2002: 91). Postmodern parody is critical and ironic and it is both "deconstructively critical and constructively creative, paradoxically making us aware of both the limits and the powers of representations in any medium" (Hutcheon, 2002: 94). Hutcheon celebrates postmodern parody as it bears an ironic stance on representation, genre and politics and as it questions and challenges all ideological positions and claims to ultimate truth.

Parody is also used extensively in postmodern fiction due to intrinsic intertextuality, what is also a key feature of postmodern fiction. According to Hutcheon, postmodern fiction rejects "the notion of the work of art as a closed, self-sufficient, autonomous object deriving its unity from the formal interrelations of its parts" (1995: 125). It takes the text not to the real world but to "world of discourse, the "world" of texts and intertexts" (Hutcheon, 1995: 125). In fact, parody or any re-visiting of history is intertextual for Hutcheon, because the past is textualized, and every traces of the past can be seen only in the texts. The postmodern theory and postmodern fiction borrow these terms, text and intertextuality from Barthes's seminal essay "From Work to Text", where he posits that "the text is not to be thought of as an

object that can be computed" but as "a process of demonstration" that is "held in language" (2006: 237). For Barthes,

> ... the work itself functions as a general sign and it is normal that it should represent an institutional category of the civilization of the Sign. The Text, on the contrary, practices the infinite deferment of the signified, is dilatory: its field is that of the signifier and the signifier must not be conceived of as "the first stage of meaning" ... but, in complete opposition to this, as its *deferred action*. .... The Text ... like language ... is structured but decentered, without closure (2006: 238).

There is text where there is language and therefore, any linguistic production is a text. He further stresses that while it is impossible to talk about closed-boundaries and systems, it is possible to see the network of texts or intertexts generating plurality of meaning:

> ... any text is an intertext: other texts are present in it, at varying levels, in more or less recognizable forms: the texts of the previous and surrounding culture. Any text is a new tissue of past citations. Bits of codes, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc. pass into the text and are redistributed within it, for there is always language before and around the text. Intertextuality is the condition of any text whatsoever ... (Barthes, 1981: 39).

Regarding Barthes, intertextuality becomes one of the most important defining characteristics of all literary periods as every literary production is "a tissue of quotations", "a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (Barthes, 2001: 1468). However, intertextuality gains importance in postmodern fiction due to the wide spread use of parody which is inherently intertextual. It can also be argued that intertextuality is an inevitable feature of the historical novels of all times as the term itself implies interrelation of at least two texts; one is the historical document that the novelist draws his story from and the literary text that he creates out of the former. Hutcheon calls attention to "the *textual* nature of the archival traces of events which are then made into facts" (2002: 75). It can be inferred that acknowledging the textual nature of an historical trace is concomitant with admitting its openness for interpretation and re-interpretation which is a subjective action. "If the past is only known to us today through its textualized traces (which, like all texts, are always open to interpretation), then the writing of both history and historiographic metafiction becomes a form of complex intertextual cross-referencing"

(Hutcheon, 2002: 78). Insisting on textuality does not necessarily mean that "the past is only textual" but implies that "past events are given *meaning*, not *existence*, by their representation in history" (Hutcheon, 2002: 78). In other words, textual traces of the past are representations of that past through which historical narratives are constructed. The historiographic metafictional texts, then, present accounts which construct a representation out of a representation.

Postmodern historiographic metafictions by Salman Rushdie, Kazuo Ishiguro, Graham Swift, Julian Barnes and others self consciously create fictitious historical accounts with extreme relativity against the totalizing grand narratives of modernity. These novelists stress the idea that historical writing of any type, be it fictional or professional, cannot be considered as free of ideological intrusion of the writer. For Hutcheon, this should be acknowledged as "the very conditions of historical knowledge" (2002: 64). In postmodernism, the historical knowledge is not a given category of knowledge but a constructed one. This construction inevitably includes the writer's personal experiences and interests, his ideological agenda and his socio-culturally shaped identity. Therefore, these novels highlight that it is impossible to talk about one single, absolute historical truth but highly contingent, relative and unstable subjective plural truths.

Against encompassing singular history imposed by a dominant ideology, be it colonialist, patriarchal or masculinist, they introduce their own histories in which they may paradoxically discredit, problematize or fault their own accounts. Within this context, postmodern historiographic metafiction becomes "revisionist" for McHale. It both "revises the content of the historical record, reinterpreting the historical record, often demystifying or debunking the orthodox version of the past" and "the conventions and norms of historical fiction itself" (1987: 90). An already told account can be rewritten or a silenced and suppressed story can finally be voiced. The officially accepted versions may be juxtaposed through parody or intertextual games and an alternative version may be introduced. As the official history is fictionalized, history itself appears as a form of fiction. Therefore, postmodern historiographic metafiction undertakes a deconstructive enterprise by dispersing the centre and stressing "there is nothing beyond the text" (Derrida, 1989: 962). Nurtured by postmodern philosophy of

historiography, it can be argued that historiographic metafiction overtly questions the possibility of attaining authentic historical knowledge by deconstructing both taken for granted position of historical documents and also the narrative tools used for representation of the past.

Framed by a historiography of postmodernism as it has been configured by such theoreticians as Foucault, White and Hutcheon, this thesis will show how the postmodern approach to history alters established knowledge about the past and how this alteration is reflected in postmodern English fiction. This study will focus on Julian Barnes's fiction, which is understood as engaging with the difficulty of narrating the past accurately. In the postmodern period, not only is the authenticity of the historical trace put into question, but so is the established notion of linear, reliable historical narration. Barnes's fiction is not about the past, but resembles archaeology – to use Foucault's term – and a metahistory – to use Hayden White's term – which together define those ways in which the past can be perceived and with what degree of accuracy it can be narrated. Conducting both thematic and formal analysis of Barnes's selected fiction, the present thesis aims to discuss the postmodern remaking of history through competitive discourses embedded in complicated power relations. The study is distinguished from previous studies of Barnes by its broader content. Even though there are studies regarding Barnes's historicism in A History of the World in 10½ Chapters and The Flaubert's Parrot (Rubinson, 2000; Buxton 2000), little attention has been given to the rest of his fiction. In this context, this study will draw a more general picture of how Barnes conceptualizes history by an analysis of his eight novels.

The thesis will consist of an introduction, three main chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter will deal with the question how the official history is treated and deconstructed in historiographic metafiction in A History of the World in 10½ Chapters (1989), The Porcupine (1992) and England England (1998). A History of the World in 10½ Chapters offers alternative accounts for general history of the world – political, religious and social – through perspectives that have been submerged hitherto. In The Porcupine, a liberal and a communist discourse meet in a trial of an overthrown communist leader in order to shape the history of an imaginary Eastern European country. Mediating on Baudrillard's notion of simulacrum and the loss of the original,

England England creates a simulacrum of national history of England where various discourses communicate in a carnivalesque manner.

The second chapter will analyse personal history in Before She Met Me (1982), Talking it Over (1991) and The Sense of an Ending (2011). In Before She Met Me, narrated in the third person, the protagonist attempts to reconstruct the past of his second wife, an ex-actress, using the sexual scenes in her old films that he watches. In Talking it Over, three narrator protagonists alternately take in charge of narration of the same chain of events, thereby, creating three distinct discourses which compete for authority and authenticity. Narrated in the first person, The Sense of an Ending centres on a protagonist who struggles to make sense of his own past which he attempts to re-shape with an anxious concern for authorial mastery but constantly shocked by the respectively revealed historical documents and traces.

The third chapter of the thesis will be devoted to biography writing and the novels selected for the analysis are The Flaubert's Parrot (1984) and Arthur and George (2005). The Flaubert's Parrot portrays an industrious biographer who takes great pains to complete an authentic version of Gustave Flaubert's life. Arthur and George is a novel with a cleverly woven structure which revolves around biographical accounts of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and George Edalji including the point where their life intersects with a blend of fictive elements. The Conclusion will present the results of the analysis.

CHAPTER II

2.1. Official History

The present chapter aims to examine and question how postmodern historical fiction treats official history by concentrating on Julian Barnes's three novels, A History of the World in 10½ Chapters (1989), The Porcupine (1992) and England, England (1998). The reason behind selecting these novels is that, in overall, these three novels by Barnes are about official history, its construction and operation system. In A History of the World in 10½ Chapters, not only the official histories of Chernobyl disaster and the Titanic but also institutionalized religious history of Noah's Ark are deconstructed by giving voices to the fictional witnesses who have been kept silence by the grand official and institutional narratives. The Porcupine, set in a fictional post-communist country, demonstrates how an official history of one country is deleted and then reconstructed in the aftermath of a revolution. The last novel, England, England, with its satirical tone and drawing on Baudrillard's concepts of simulacrum and hyperreality, introduces a constructed replica of England's official history on a quasi-dystopic theme park established on the Isle of Wight.

Although these three novels have different contexts and peculiar experimental styles, they all share a tendency to underline the ideologically partial and limited tone of the official histories that omit, repress and silence the opposite voices pose danger to the survival of the dominant system. In parallel with Barnes's novels dealing with personal histories, these three novels on official history also display a variety in style and technique which clearly demonstrates the author's efforts to highlight the impossibility of an authentic historical narration free of biases, prejudices and ideological contaminations, which are features describing the nature of the official histories. In his article, "Can Official History be Honest History?", Martin Blumenson clarifies that:

> Official history is authorized history, history sponsored and published by or with the support of an agency of government. Since it is authorized and approved, official history, by its very nature, must be partisan, must incorporate a particular, in this case an official, point of view. Thus, because official history presents a special outlook or plea that serves the government, it may not be able to follow where the evidence leads. It may have to overlook or even suppress pertinent information. It cannot, consequently, meet the tests of objectivity, balance, and independence of judgment. At best a bland, cautious, diluted version of the truth, official history cannot be honest (1963: 153).

Official history must serve to a purpose drawn by the authorities who desire a history within their ideological agenda. Historians who write official histories become "court historians, 'kept' men who allow their work to be censored or who censor it themselves before publication" (Blumenson, 1963: 153). In this sense, in Louis Althusser's terms, the official history becomes one of the Ideological State Apparatuses which "function massively and predominantly *by ideology*," but which "also function secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic" (2008: 19). As an Ideological State Apparatus, the official history is shaped by the ideology of the ruling class. It also represses or silences the voices that stand against it even by disregarding the hard proofs.

Althusser proposes that "the ideological State apparatus which has been installed in the *dominant* position in mature capitalist social formations as a result of a violent political and ideological class struggle against the old dominant ideological State apparatus, is the *educational ideological apparatus*" (2008: 26). It is true that the official history is mostly placed in the curriculums of educational systems of the states. Claiming that "official history texts can be said to occupy a middle ground between religious texts, on the one hand, and other sorts of texts grounded in documentation and rational argument," (2008: 28) James V. Wertsch identifies education system as the most obvious mean of imposing the official history:

> States typically possess several means for carrying out these tasks, the most obvious being mandatory universal education. More specifically with regard to the formation of collective memory, they have means such as national examinations in history to ensure that their citizens are conversant, at least to some degree, with official history. State institutions such as museums, media, and commemorative organizations that coordinate the observation of national holidays also play a role in this effort (2002: 68).

For Wertsch, the main intent in teaching the student the official history is not to make them aware of it, but to make them "believe it, to take ownership of it as a usable past, and this suggests that collective memory rather than historical memory is involved" (2002: 85). Historical memory can be distorted in order to create a collective memory out of which individual identity can be shaped which requires exclusion of the other, who does not conform to the identity tag drawn by the ruling ideology. As the previously excluded other, like gays, feminists, or ethnic minorities, could find outlet to make his/her voice be heard within the postmodern age, the credibility of the official history has diminished gradually:

> Thanks to the pioneering work of Marxists, feminists, gays, black and ethnics theorists, there is a new awareness in these fields that history cannot be written without ideological and institutional analysis, including analysis of the act of writing itself. It is no longer enough to be suspicious or playful as a writer about art or literature; the theorist and the critic are inevitably implicated in both ideologies and institutions (Hutcheon: 1995, 91).

Historiographic metafictional novels counter the official history by creating alternative histories of their own either by rewriting through distortion of the official truth or by creating totally a new version. Especially, postcolonial novels, quintessentially like Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children (1980), delegitimize the official colonial history by rewriting their own histories within their own point of view. "In my India, Gandhi will continue to die at the wrong time," (2006: 230) says Saleem Sinai, the protagonist narrator in Midnight's Children. Postmodern historiographic metafiction consciously and willingly plays with the official history not to claim that its version is the accurate one but to stress the impossibility of attaining an accurate version of that history.

According to Brian McHale, classic historical fiction, on the other hand, does not enjoy the freedom as postmodern historical fiction does with regard to the official history. "Historical realemes—persons, events, specific objects, and so on—can only be introduced on condition that the properties and actions attributed to them in the text do not actually contradict the "official" historical record" (McHale, 1987: 87). It stays within the framework drawn by the established and accepted official historical records and has the chance of a fictional activity which is "limited to the 'dark areas' of history,

that is, to those aspects about which the "official" record has nothing to report" (McHale, 1987: 87). Moreover, it has to be in accordance with "the entire *system* of realemes" which covers the whole culture of a given historical period (McHale, 1987: 87). As the last and most important constraint, McHale points that "the logic and physics of the fictional world must be compatible with those of reality if historical realemes are to be transferred from one realm to the other," which necessitates that "historical fictions must be realistic fictions" (McHale, 1987: 88). As the realist tradition dictates, the reader should not notice the transfer of a historical figure from one realm to another, from the real world to the fictional world of the historical fiction.

Postmodern historical fiction highlights the transfer of a historical figure not only to stress the fictional nature of both the official historical text and the novel but also to lay bare the process of historical writing itself. The violation of the boundary between the official history and the fictional one becomes visible as postmodern historical fiction contradicts the established facts of the official history. McHale identifies three strategies that postmodern historical fiction employs to revise the historical content. The first one, apocryphal history "either ... supplements the historical record, claiming to restore what has been lost or suppressed; or it displaces official history altogether" (McHale, 1987: 90). Creative anachronism, the second one, scandalizes the material culture of a certain historical period by freely imposing it onto the material culture of another period "to produce an impossible hybrid" (McHale, 1987: 91). The last one, historical fantasy is "the strategy of integrating history and the fantastic, a flagrant violation of the realistic norms of historical fiction" (McHale, 1987: 94). All these strategies are used to foreground the unreliability of the official history, its ideological position and partiality. Barnes's three novels, A History of the World in 10½ Chapters, The Porcupine and England, England, selected to be analysed in this chapter, stand against the official history either by supplementing the existing historical record or by totally denying it. By doing so, these novels introduce the repressed histories that counter and negate the official one to foreground the fictional nature of the latter.

2.2. A History of The World in 10 ½ Chapters

This section will analyse how Barnes, in A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters, undermines the totalitarian authority of the official history by creating a context in which historical records and narratives are re-examined and then re-constructed by imaginary witnesses. Within this context, Barnes revisions history by questioning the certainty of the historical knowledge. He constructs multiple historical discourses which stand against the totalitarian understanding of history as they introduce alternative versions as opposed to the established and the acknowledged versions. Echoing E. H. Carr who claims that history is "an enormous jig-saw with a lot of missing parts" (1987: 13), Barnes tries to fill in the blanks of the grand narratives with the accounts of the previously excluded and marginalized.

The novel is quite experimental in form pushing the novel genre towards its extremes. For Gregory J. Rubinson, tagging A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters as a novel is "already a way of glossing over its radical use of genre," because the ten chapters and the half one neither follow a linear plot construction nor they are woven into one another solidly as expected from a conventional novel (2005: 164). Rubinson asserts that chapters are loosely held together "by a series of themes, events, objects, and personae which recur in different historical contexts" (2005: 165). The chapters do not follow a chronological order and there are time gaps between these chapters. While some chapters are based on well-known specific historical moments, some concentrate on less important events. Barnes explains this superficial irregularity as "one good story leads to another" (Barnes, 2009: 242). The common point of these discrepant chapters is their ironic tone and obstinacy in interpreting the history against the grain. Jackie Buxton also confirms that "closer inspection reveals a random series of apparently unrelated episodes with little rightful claim to the grand narrative paradigm that 'a history of the world' suggests" (2000: 57). However, Buxton further posits that "Barnes's text is an interrogation of grand narrative, rather than an acquiescent surrender to its historical force," since each chapter submits a revision of an established historical narrative, either religious or political (2000: 57). The use of indefinite article in the title of the novel also implies its stance against the grand narratives of history. It is not "the history" but "a history of the world" because it is just one version among

many others. However, the indefinite article delegitimizes not only the versions proposed in the novel, but also other accounts which claim to be "the history," degrading them as other versions.

The half chapter, entitled "Parenthesis" and located between the seventh and the eighth chapters, provides a theoretical basis not only for this novel but also for Barnes's other novels. Even though it functions like an essay on love, it illuminates Barnes's idea of history. The tone of the essay is personal and narrated in the first person narration. The identity of the narrator is problematic: "when I say 'I' you will want to know within a paragraph or two whether I mean Julian Barnes or someone invented: a poet can shimmy between the two, getting credit for both deep feeling and objectivity" (*History* 227). However, the narrator who reflects his considerations on love and history in the middle of the night while lying beside his wife is in strong correlation with Barnes's works. Moreover, through this essay, Barnes's ideas on history can be linked with Hayden White's theory of metahistory. In this half chapter, Barnes declares that "History isn't what happened. History is just what historians tell us" (History 242). Similarly, Hayden White in "The Historical Text as a Literary Artifact," claims that "historical events are value-neutral" and their form "depends upon the historian's decision to configure them according to the imperatives of one plot structure or mythos rather than another" (1978: 84). Both suggest the impossibility of attaining the crude historical event as it is. What is produced as historical narrative is the refined version of those crude historical events and how the refinement is conducted depends on the historian:

> No given set of casually recorded historical events in themselves constitute a story; the most that they offer to the historian are story elements. The events are made into a story by the suppression or subordination of certain of them and the highlighting of others, by characterization, motific representation, variation of tone and point of view, alternative descriptive strategies, and the like-in short, all of the techniques that we would normally expect to find in the emplotment of a novel or a play (White, 1978: 84).

Any kind of historical narration necessitates the suppression or omission of certain aspects of that history which do not conform to the ideological scheme of the historian. White suggests that different plot structures can be used in the narration of historical events "to provide different interpretations of those events and to endow them

with different meanings," and this configuration "depends on the historian's subtlety in matching up a specific plot structure with the set of historical events that he wishes to endow with a meaning of a particular kind" (1978: 85). What metahistory aims to do is "to get behind or beneath the presuppositions which sustain a given type of inquiry and ask the questions that can be begged in its practice in the interest of determining why this type of inquiry has been designed to solve the problems it characteristically tries to solve" (White, 1978: 81). In parallel, Barnes tries to step beyond the conventional forms of storytelling in order to question and lay bare the working system of historical narrations:

> The history of the world? Just voices echoing in the dark; images that burn for a few centuries and then fade; stories, old stories that sometimes seem to overlap; strange links, impertinent connections. We think we know who we are, though we don't quite know why we're here, or how long we shall be forced to stay. And while we fret and writhe in bandaged uncertainty – are we a voluntary patient? – we fabulate. We make up a story to cover the facts we don't know or can't accept; we keep a few true facts and spin a new story round them. Our panic and our pain are only eased by soothing fabulation; we call it history (History 242).

Likewise, in his "The Discourse of History," Barthes defines the historical discourse as an "*imaginary* elaboration" and argues "the historian is not so much a collector of facts as a collector and relater of signifiers; that is to say, he organizes them with the purpose of establishing positive meaning and filling the vacuum of pure, meaningless series" (1981: 16). In order to avoid the meaninglessness of history, in order to be protected from the pains and sufferings of it, Barnes claims, like Barthes and White, historical events are fabulated to render them more rational and hence, harmless because the real history of the world undermines any attempt to make sense out of it. The most basic humanist desire is to see a progress and an order in the course of the world history which is, however, devoid of it. Barnes argues that through fabulation people can only sense "we're always progressing, always going forward" (History 241). Within this fictional progress, "we, the readers of history, the sufferers from history, we scan the pattern for hopeful conclusions, for the way ahead" (History 242). However, for Barnes, the real history of the world is full of serious repeated mistakes like wars, murders, or oppressions which have been committed again and again in different epochs by the power holders. Asking whether man "stopped making the old mistakes, or new mistakes, or new versions of old mistakes," Barnes concludes that "history just burps,

and we taste again that raw-onion sandwich it swallowed centuries ago" (History 241). Fabulation, Barnes suggests, is a way to avoid the bad taste of history which necessarily entails mixing of the crude historical event with certain flavours of imagination. This mixture, on the other hand, poses a great obstacle to access the objective historical truth. Accepting the impossibility of getting hold of the objective truth, Barnes paradoxically suggests the importance of maintaining the belief in the objective truth:

> We all know objective truth is not obtainable, that when some event occurs we shall have a multiplicity of subjective truths which we assess and then fabulate into history, into some God-eyed version of what 'really' happened. This God-eyed version is a fake – a charming, impossible fake ... But while we know this, we must still believe that objective truth is obtainable; or we must believe that it is 99 per cent obtainable; or if we can't believe this we must believe that 43 per cent objective truth is better than 41 per cent. We must do so, because if we don't we're lost, we fall into beguiling relativity, we value one liar's version as much as another liar's, we throw up our hands at the puzzle of it all, we admit that the victor has the right not just to the spoils but also to the truth (History 245-246).

Barnes attempts to raise an awareness concerning the multiplicity and subjectivity of any historical narration. By drawing attention to the subjective nature of historical narrations, Barnes implies that one should be aware of the personal inputs inherent in these narrations. This act is not a total negation of historical narratives but a genuine warning of Barnes for not to submit to any historical narrative – grand or local, religious or official – before a thorough questioning. This is a reminder that there may be other versions of the same story which might be lost in the mothballs and which equally deserves attention. Barnes requests empathy for the lost, omitted or modified versions of the history of the world and he believes "love" is the fuel for this stand against the grand narratives. "Love won't change the history of the world, but it will do something much more important: teach us to stand up to history, to ignore its chin-out strut" (History 240). Otherwise, there will be only stories of the victor and the history of the world will be constructed by the victors. The significant reference to the "victor" foregrounds how historical narrative is shaped by the power and underlines the importance of the counter narratives which face the officially designed grand narratives. Thus, Barnes in his novel makes a compilation of disparate historical accounts of the defeated, the victim, the marginalized and the excluded, and thereby, proposes his version of "a history of the world."

In the first chapter, titled "Stowaway," Barnes revisions the Judeo-Christian myth of Noah and the Ark within the perspective of a stowaway woodworm and creates a counter narrative which is antithetical to the versions found in the sacred books. The woodworm's tone is both critical and self-reflexive: "You don't have to believe me, of course, but what do your own archives say?" (History 16). Even though the woodworm is aware that "accounts differ," it insists that this version is authentic and trustworthy: "My account you can trust" (History 4). However, the account offered by the woodworm is totally at odds with the conventional myth. Barnes's narrator sometimes corrects a mistake of the old version, and sometimes introduces a fresh knowledge which has been omitted in the sacred books. The most striking contradiction occurs in the woodworm's portrayal of Noah:

> I don't know how best to break this to you, but Noah was not a nice man. I realize this idea is embarrassing, since you are all descended from him; still, there it is. He was a monster, a puffed-up patriarch who spent half his day groveling to his god and other half taking it out on us (History 12).

While the sacred books define Noah as a kind, venerable man, for woodworm, he is "an old rogue with a drink problem who was already into his seventh century of life" (History 8). His family members act cruelly against the animals in the ark which is "more like a prison ship" (History 4). The ark is totally different from those "nursery versions in painted wood which you might have played with as a child – all happy couples peering merrily over the rail from the comfort of their well-scrubbed stalls" (History 3). The woodworm's account also problematizes the duration of the Flood. While for the sacred books "it rained forty days and forty nights," for the woodworm, that "would have been no more than a routine English summer" (History 4). Complaining that man "has always been hopeless about dates," the woodworm claims that "it rained for about a year and a half" (History 4). The woodworm also claims that there is more than one ship: "you could hardly expect to cram the entire animal kingdom into something a mere three hundred cubits long" (History 4). However, in the woodworm's account, several of those ships are lost during the dangerous voyage causing not only total clearance of some animal species but also the disappearance of Varadi, Noah's youngest son whose name is never mentioned in the sacred books:

Still, the worst disaster by far was the loss of Varadi. You're familiar with Ham and Shem and the other one, whose name began with a J; but you don't know about Varadi, do you? He was the youngest and strongest of Noah's sons; which didn't, of course, make him the most popular within the family. ... It was said that his ark was run on much less tyrannical lines than the others. ... One morning we awoke to find that Varadi's ship had vanished from the horizon, taking with it one fifth of the animal kingdom. You would, I think, have enjoyed the simurgh, with its silver head and peacock's tail. ... It was a severe loss to your species. His genes would have helped you a great deal (History 5 – 6).

The woodworm's harsh criticism against mankind is grounded on Noah's misbehaviours against the animals on the ark. Many of them become extinct not because of the hard conditions of the voyage but because of Noah's arbitrary acts. Due to "his horror of cross-breeding," basilisk, griffon, sphinx and hippogriff are exterminated (History 20). Some animals like salamender and behemoth are cleared off when the Noah's family put them on their diet. "What the hell do you think Noah and his family ate in the Ark? They ate us" (History 13). However, some animals become extinct because of Noah's envy and his wife's greed. The carbuncle is slaughtered by Noah as his wife believes that there is a "precious jewel inside its skull" (History 15). The unicorn falls victim to Noah's jealousy:

The unavoidable fact is that Noah was jealous. We all looked up to the unicorn, and he couldn't stand it. Noah – what point is there in not telling you the truth? – was bad tempered, smelly, unrealiable and cowardly…whereas the unicorn was strong, honest, fearless impeccably groomed and a mariner who never knew a moment's queasiness (History 16).

The woodworm composes its inherently contradictory account in a very confident tone because it claims that during his composition it feels "no sense of obligation; gratitude puts no smear of Vaseline on the lens" (History 4). The woodworm feels "euphoric" just because they "stowed away, survived and escaped – all without entering into any shy covenants with either God or Noah" (History 28). As the woodworm does not feel any obligation to be paid to any power system, it claims to construct the history of the Flood without any prejudices or political scheme which would function to please the power holders while betraying the authenticity. However, according to the woodworm mankind is not that successful when it comes to handling the truth:

You aren't too good with the truth, either, your species. You keep forgetting things, or you pretend to. The loss of Varadi and his ark – does anyone speak of The loss of Varadi and his ark – does anyone speak of that? I can see there might be a positive side to this wilful averting of the eye: ignoring the bad things makes it easier for you to carry on. But ignoring the bad things makes you end up believing that bad things never happen. You are always surprised by them. It surprises you that guns kill, that money corrupts, that snow falls in winter. Such naivety can be charming; alas, it can also be perilous (History 29).

Using the woodworm as his mouthpiece, Barnes gives hints about his ideas on history later to be developed in "Parenthesis". What Barnes's narrator claims is that man modifies history with regard to his needs, pains and interests. While the real history is unbearable, the modified one becomes endurable. Man acts selectively while he constructs history which then becomes subjective. In other words, the historical events are turned into narratives by interpretation. As the woodworm points out, the biblical stories are also interpreted versions of the historical events. Similarly, Barnes introduces the Bible as a historical document that can be interpreted according to one's point of view in the third chapter, titled "Wars of Religion." The chapter features again the woodworms who are accused of corroding one leg of the Bishop's throne and hence, causing his fall from the throne. The villager applies to court for the excommunication and banishment of the woodworms both from the village and from the Holy Church. The woodworms are absent throughout the trial. The chapter starts with a citation of the source: "the Archives Municipales de Besançon (section CG, boîte 377a)" (History 61). In *Author's Note* placed at the end of the novel, Barnes declares that this chapter "is based on legal procedures and actual cases described in The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals by E. P. Evans (1906)" (History 311). Having established a factual basis, Barnes builds the chapter on the trial transcripts which are originally in French. Therefore, Barnes uses tiring legal discourse which enhances the absurdity of the trial of the woodworms. Prosecution translates the accusation of the petitioner villagers into legal discourse:

Oh malevolent invaders! And how the Bishop fell, striking his head upon the altar step and being hurled against his will into a state of imbecility. And how, when the Bishop and his retinue had departed, bearing off the Bishop in a state of imbecility, the terriffed petitioners did examine the Bishop's throne and discover in the leg that had tumbled down like the walls of Jericho a vile and unnatural infestation of woodworm, and how these woodworm, having secretly and darkly gone about their devilish work, had so

devoured the leg that the Bishop did fall like mighty Daedalus from the heavens of light into the darkness of imbecility (History 64).

Both the prosecution and the defence base their arguments on the Bible. Claiming that "Holy writ makes no mention of the woodworm embarking upon or disembarking from the mighty vessel of Noah," (History 72) the prosecution argues that "the actions for which it has been summoned to appear before the court are clear evidence that it has been taken over by a malign spirit, namely that of Lucifer" (History 72-74). The defence also resorts to the Bible in their respond which highlights that "the Holy Scripture does not list every species of God's creation, and that the legal presumption should be that any creature was upon the Ark unless it be specifically stated that he was not" (History 75). Both the prosecution and the defence draw from The Bible which functions in this chapter as a historical record. As they interpret this source from their own position, the source yields multiple interpretations which are equally rational. On the other hand, the discussion in the third chapter can be interpreted as the outcome of the woodworm's omission from the Holy Script. Therefore, the woodworm's insistence on restoring his place in that peculiar history becomes significant. Within this context, Barnes suggests that historical records are unreliable not only because they are open to interpretation but also they tend to omit certain aspects which may later become significant.

The story of Noah recurs in Chapter Six, "The Mountain," and Chapter Nine, "Project Ararat" in which characters attempt to uncover the remnants of the Noah's ark in the Mount Ararat. In "the Mountain," Miss Amanda Fergusson takes the journey to discover the ark in order to "intercede for the soul of [her] father" who as a man of science "have failed to recognize God, His eternal design, and its essential goodness" (History 149). However, Miss Ferguson is disillusioned by the journey as she comes across a blasphemous priest who offers them a bottle of wine made out of the vineyard which was supposedly cultivated by Noah himself. An earthquake strikes the mountain wiping out the church and a close village but the blasphemous vineyard remains undamaged. Unable to find the ark, Miss Ferguson falls off a slope and dies in a cave. "Project Ararat" takes place almost a hundred years later in 1974. During a moon expedition, Spike Tiggler, an astronaut, hears a voice calling him to find Noah's ark. He organizes an expedition to find the ark but he can only find a human skeleton in a cave

which he mistakes for Noah but actually is Miss Fergusson's remnants. Both Miss Fergusson and Spike Tiggler experience the real history of the world. Their endeavour to find proof for their spiritual faith is crushed by the materiality of the world. Their assumptions which indicate a Holy ordered world history is hence defeated.

The recurrent motif of ship reappears as the setting of the second chapter, titled "The Visitors." The ship called the Santa Euphemia carries tourists, mostly Western European and North American. Franklyn Hughes, the protagonist, gives lectures on the ship concerning the history of the places the ship stops by, which mainly includes Greek and Roman history. During his lectures, "he roved freely in the worlds of archaeology, history and comparative culture" (History 34). His speciality lies in his ability to introduce "contemporary allusion which would rescue and enliven for the average viewer such dead subjects as Hannibal's crossing of the Alps, or Viking treasure hoards in East Anglia, or Herod's palaces" (History 34). Franklyn modifies history into a form that would appeal to the tourists. In his narrations, "Hannibal's elephants" become" the panzer divisions of their age;" Herod is likened to "Mussolini with good taste" (History 34). Passengers on the ship appreciate Franklyn's enthusiasm: "how refreshing it was in these cynical times, and how he really made history come alive for them" (History 35). However, in the middle of the journey the ship is hijacked by an Anti-Zionist group called the Black Thunder. The passengers are classified according to their passports implying that some sort of order will be followed in executions. "Zionist Americans first. Then other Americans. Then British. Then French, Italians and Canadians" (History 57). The leader of the group picks Franklyn to explain the situation and "introduce a historical view of the matter" to the passenger (History 52). The leader believes that the passengers at least deserve to know "how they are mixed up in history. What that history is" (History 51). Franklyn accepts in change for a relative security for his girlfriend which means terrorists' acceptance of her as Irish citizen.

The historical lecture Franklyn accepts to deliver is necessarily constructed on the ideology of the terrorist group. In Hayden White's term, Franklyn emplots the story by suppressing some events while highlighting others and creates a history that would satisfy the terrorist group. He starts his lecture with a long list of reference to the historical events starting from the nineteenth century to justify the terrorists' act of

violence to his audience; "The regrettable necessity of violence, a lesson taught the Arabs by the Jews, just as it had been taught the Jews by the Nazis" (History 55). While he produces a history of the world within the Middle Eastern perspective, he feels like "a hypnotist" and the audience offers "themselves to the story-teller in the manner of audiences down the ages, wanting to see how things turned out, wanting to have the world explained to them" (History 56). Franklyn's ideologically shaped narrative highlights "the historical inevitability" of the attack which, according to the narrative, legitimizes the killing of the civilians (History 57):

> In the Middle East, we must understand, there are no civilians any more. The Zionists understand this, the Western governments do not. We, alas, are not civilians. The Zionists have made this happen (History 56).

The history Franklyn produces for his new masters is an example of historical relativism. The hijackers never call themselves terrorists but "freedom fighters" (History 48). Franklyn's refers to them both as terrorists or the visitors. However, during the lecture he calls them as "the freedom fighters" proving Barnes's awareness that history is written and shaped by the victorious (History 57). Man who has held the power over nature designated the story of Noah and expelled the woodworm out of his history. In this chapter, the armed men impose a history in which they are identified as "freedom fighters." However, their Middle Eastern version of history clashes with the Western version. In this extreme condition, Franklyn becomes the official court historian of the Middle Eastern point of view and he creates a narrative within their demands blurring the line between fact and fiction.

The storyteller, Franklyn, possesses the power to beguile the audience by transforming discrepant events into a narrative unity at the expense of distortion of the real. The storyteller of the following chapter, "The Survivor," also problematizes the line between fact and fiction. The chapter is comprised of two narrative levels related alternately by first and third person narrations. There is no indication given to the reader to identify which level is imaginary or real. The historical setting is the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster. Fearing a nuclear war, Kathleen Ferris, the protagonist, puts out to sea on a small boat with two cats. This is the first level while in the second level Kath is in a mental institution treated by a male doctor. While Kath believes this level to be her

nightmares, and therefore, not real, for the Doctor, the other level is the product of her imagination. Kath herself cannot identify the point where the reality starts and imagination ends: "I couldn't tell last night. I was coming out of a dream, or maybe I was still in it, but I heard the cats, I swear I did" (History 92). As Kath moves from one level to the other, Barnes introduces a feminist critique of the official history of the world designated by the patriarchal order. For Kath, they are "the men in grey suits," who deem themselves as the measure of everything (History 93). However, the progress that the men in grey suits ascribe to history would eventually lead to annihilation as epitomized by the Chernobyl disaster. "Look what they went and did – they blew themselves up. Silly cows" (History 103). Male-ordered history of the world is full of such cases:

> They say I'm not making the right connections. Listen to them, listen to them and their connections. This happened, they say, and as a consequence that happened. There was a battle here, a war there, a king was deposed, famous men – always famous men, I'm sick of famous men – made events happen. Maybe I've been out in the sun too long, but I can't see their connections. I look at the history of the world, which they don't seem to realize is coming to an end, and I don't see what they see. All I see is the old connections, the ones we don't take any notice of anymore because that makes it easier to poison the reindeer and paint stripes down their backs and feed them to mink. Who made that happen? Which famous man will claim the credit for that? (History 97)

Kath does not believe that history can offer rational reasons to acknowledge a progress in it which would ultimately lead to total annihilation. Disillusioned by the apocalyptic progress of history, she foregrounds the necessity to find "the old ways of doing things" as "the future lay in the past" (History 96). Being "more closely connected to all the cycles of nature and birth and rebirth on the planet than men," women are "in tune with the planet" providing them a chance to anticipate "things which threaten the whole existence of the planet" (History 89). However, she feels herself and the history of the world trapped by men:

> She was in a sort of cage, as far as she could tell: on either side of her metal bars rose vertically. Men came and saw her, always men. She thought she must write down the nightmares, write them down as well as the true things that were happening. She told the men in the nightmares that she was going to write about them. They smiled and said they would give her a pencil and paper. She refused. She said she would use her own (History 96)

In her construction of the history, by refusing the pencil and paper offered to her, Kath refuses to use the means provided to her by the men. Moreover, it is impossible for her to write the history because her hands are bound by the bandages. In this level, the Doctor, who speaks to her "patronizingly" and "without really listening to her," becomes the symbol of the patriarch (History 103,109). For the Doctor, Kath suffers "persistent victim syndrome" because she cannot cope with the fact that her boyfriend Greg left her (History 108). According to him, the nightmares of Kath are the products of her fabulation to overcome the harsh reality: "You make up a story to cover the facts you don't know or can't accept. You keep a few true facts and spin a new story round them" (History 109). Contradictorily, Kath insists the moments that she spends with the Doctor are the moments when she starts fabulating: "It was all about her mind being afraid of its own death, that's what she finally decided. When her skin got bad and her hair started falling out, her mind tried to think up an alternative explanation" (History 111). The chapter ends as one of the cats gives birth to "five tortoiseshell kittens," without any resolution offered (History 111).

Barnes in A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters provides the reader with multiple historical discourses within multiple contexts through discrepant and seemingly unrelated chapters. While this gesture undermines the view which perceives a positive progress in the course of history, it highlights its repetitive nature. On the other hand, while the historical events tend to have repetitive nature, man transforms these events into official or religious narrative units through the processes of omission, modification and distortion. Barnes composes "a history" of the world which implies the acknowledgment of the possible other histories. The same sequence of events can be formulated into multiple narrative forms with different points of view. The novel, in this sense, becomes Barnes's challenge against the grand narratives of history, his attempt to read the history of the world against the grain. While in this novel Barnes introduces alternative versions of the official world history, in The Porcupine, he mediates on how the official history of a nation can be adjusted in accordance with a newly emerging system and how the perception of a certain period of nation's history can be altered through rhetoric.

2.3. The Porcupine

Published in 1992, The Porcupine is Barnes's political satire where he puts Western liberal democratic ideology side by side with the communist ideology in a trial that takes place in a fictional East European country which is on the passage from communism to liberal democracy in the aftermath of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. In this trial, the accused is the overthrown dictator of the old order, while the prosecutor stands for the new order. The prosecutor's ultimate aim is not only to find the overthrown dictator guilty but also, by condemning him, to change the way how the nation's official history, specifically the period that spans the rule of the dictator, is perceived by the people. The dictator deems that period as one of the most glorious periods in the nation's history. On the contrary, the prosecutor desires to turn this perception upside-down by proving the corruption and malfunction in that period.

In the novel, Barnes imagines what would happen if a communist leader is brought to the court. "What if? What if a communist leader came to trial – what if, instead of running away or pretending he had cancer or whatever, what if he decided to defend himself by attacking?" (Barnes, 2009: 25). He, then, creates a fictional setting which, in fact, reflects Bulgaria as the country in transition from communism to liberal democracy. In one of his letters to the Bulgarian translator of the novel, Dimitrina Kondeva, with whom he corresponds repeatedly during the novel's creation, Barnes makes it clear that the setting is fictional despite certain similarities:

> You will see that the country is not Bulgaria, though much of it resembles Bulgaria that Petkanov is not Zhivkov, though he often speaks his lines (there is an additive of Ceausescu, of course), and that the trial, though it parallels Zhivkov's trial, is not his. Nevertheless, I do not expect you to read the book thinking, 'Gosh, what a strange and distant country Julian has imagined (qtd. in Kondeva: 2011: 87).

In this fictional setting, Barnes takes a communist ex-leader into a trial which gradually turns into a show trial with forged evident and fictional accusations. In the trial, the accused is Stoyo Petkanov, based on Todor Zhivkov the ex-communist ruler of Bulgaria, and the prosecutor is Peter Solinsky who symbolizes the new order. The group of university students who follow the trial on television represents the perspective of the people. Petkanov is charged with embezzlement and corruption. However, for Peter

Solinsky, the prosecutor, these accusations are not enough since he ambitiously wants to legitimize the new order by debasing the old regime. This passion leads him to allege fictional accusations which even include the claim holding Petkanov responsible for the death of his own daughter. Gradually, Solinsky does not only lose the control of the trial, but also people's faith in him as Petkanov fights back claiming that Solinsky once spent the state's fund for an expensive suit and abused his official duty by having an illegal affair in Italy with an Italian woman. At the end of the trial, while Petkanov is charged with relatively small offences, Solinsky loses his credibility, ruins his career and his family falls apart. Following the trial on television, the nation which suffers deeply the shortage of any kind in their life is also split into two. While young population believes the change as a chance for a more liberal country, the old people fear the return of fascism.

Regarding Barnes's other novels, The Porcupine is distinguished with its apparent conventional traditional narrative form. Highlighting that The Porcupine is "a strikingly different kind of novel for Julian Barnes," Merritt Moseley puts forward that "there is nothing postmodern about it; it is not tricky, or experimental, or dazzling, or even barring a few wry inventions particularly witty" (1997: 148). Peter Childs also approves that "in the formal terms, The Porcupine indeed appears to be a traditional narrative and seems almost pointedly to confound critics' expectations" (2011: 98). Moreover, in an interview, Barnes himself acknowledges that novel makes use of traditional narrative form: "When I wrote *The Porcupine*, I deliberately used a traditional narrative because I felt that any sort of tricksiness would distract from the story I was trying to tell" (Barnes, 2009: 73-74). The novel is also close to the classic historical fiction as the fictional world it creates is compatible with the material and social culture of the period and the real historical figures, objects and events are not violated in their transfer to the fictional realm. (McHale, 1987: 87)

However, despite its obvious conventional form, it can also be argued that the novel is thematically postmodern since it can be associated with postmodern discussions on history. First of all, and most interestingly, the publication date of the novel coincides with the debate on Francis Fukuyama's thesis of the end of history which was later challenged and negated by Jacques Derrida. Fukuyama in The End of History and

the Last Man (1992) asserts that the modern Western liberal democracy is the ultimate and the most successful form of human government, the point where the Hegelian dialectic of history necessarily comes to an end:

> While some present-day countries might fail to achieve stable liberal democracy, and others might lapse back into other, more primitive forms of rule like theocracy or military dictatorship, the ideal of liberal democracy could not be improved on (1992: xi).

Unlike Baudrillard who associates the end of history with the impossibility of writing history because of both acceleration and deceleration of the postmodern life (1994: 1) what Fukuyama suggests is the end of history "understood as a single, coherent, evolutionary process, when taking into account the experience of all peoples in all Times" (1992: xii). In Specters of Marx (1993), Derrida explicitly criticizes the idea which claims that modern liberal democracy is the end of history as it is the ultimate point human civilization can reach:

> For it must be cried out, at a time when some have the audacity to neo-evangelize in the name of the ideal of a liberal democracy that has finally realized itself as the ideal of human history: never have violence, inequality, exclusion, famine, and thus economic oppression affected as many human beings in the history of the earth and of humanity. Instead of singing the advent of the ideal of liberal democracy and of the capitalist market in the euphoria of the end of history, instead of celebrating the 'end of ideologies' and the end of the great emancipatory discourses, let us never neglect this obvious macroscopic fact, made up of innumerable singular sites of suffering: no degree of progress allows one to ignore that never before, in absolute figures, have so many men, women and children been subjugated, starved or exterminated on the earth (1994: 85).

Although Barnes never makes a direct reference to the discussion on "the end of history" debate, the novel can be read with respect to the debate. The prosecutor in the trial believes that passage to the new order that is liberal democracy with free market will be the ultimate solution that will save the nation. In this sense, in the public view, Solinsky "represented the new order against the old, the future against the past, virtue against vice" (TP 56). When he delivered speeches in the media, "he customarily invoked the national conscience, moral duty, his plan of easing truth like a dandelion leaf from between the teeth of lies" (TP 57). The four university students who represent

the young population also cherish a hope that the new order will open the door for the maturity of the nation:

> They had to be witnesses, Vera insisted. All four of them together: Vera, Atanas, Stefan and Dimiter. This was a great moment in their country's history, a farewell to grim childhood and grey, fretful adolescence. It was the end of lies and illusions; now the time had arrived when truth was possible, when maturity began. How could they be absent from that? (TP 35)

However, the overthrown ex-leader Petkanov is highly critical against the new order. Moreover, he does not believe that it is the point in which socialism terminates ultimately. In the trial, he tries to rationalize the failure of socialism saying "You don't get to Heaven at the first jump" (TP 142). For Petkanov, socialism only had "one jump" while capitalism had "many jumps already. Many centuries and many jumps. Jump, jump, jump" (TP 142). As if attacking Fukuyama and his thesis of the end of history, Petkanov degrades capitalism echoing Derrida's counter argument:

> And what do people want? They want stability and hope. We gave them that. Things might not have been perfect, but with Socialism people could dream that one day they might be. You – you have only given them instability and hopelessness. A crime wave. The black market. Pornography. Prostitution. Foolish women gibbering in front of priests again. The so-called Crown Prince offering himself as saviour of the nation. You are proud of these swift achievements? (TP 97)

Barnes's juxtaposition of the two competing systems within Petkanov and Solinsky's discussion is further enhanced as Stefan's grandmother, as the mouthpiece of the older generation, declares her anxiety for the turbulence that the country goes through. Barnes also uses the figure of the grandmother in order to display the discrepancy between the older generation and the younger one in the way they perceive the historical change. According to Childs, "their youthful idealism, which sees only a change in history, is contrasted with the older people's awareness of cycles and patterns" (2011: 104). The experienced and mature generation denies the end of history thesis as they had been witnesses to "glorious cycle of revolution" in the history:

> How long would it be before the Party was banned again, forced to go underground? Before the Fascists resurfaced, and young men searched their attics for the faded green shirts of their Iron Guard grandfathers? Ahead she saw an inevitable return to the oppression of the working class, to unemployment and inflation being used as political

weapons. But she also saw, beyond that, the moment when men and women would rise and shake themselves, recovering their rightful dignity and starting again the whole glorious cycle of revolution. She would be dead by then, of course, but she did not doubt that it would come to pass (TP 78-79).

Moseley also agrees that in the novel the new and the old order is confronted, but he criticizes that the old system is portrayed to be "more balanced than one might expect, or hope; it would be possible to read the novel as suggesting nearly moral equivalence between Bolshevism and liberalism" (1997: 150). Childs, on the other hand, points out that the novel "remains sceptical of idealism and refuses either to see events from one side or to take comfort from political or religious rhetoric," by maintaining "an uncommitted, slightly detached, and therefore seemingly well-balanced authorial presence" (2011: 98). In parallel with his other novels, Barnes's authorial presence is never felt in the novel as he "is in no wise a simple reactionary but is predisposed to see the arguments on both sides, and put them to the reader" (Childs, 2011: 99). What he does is to put the two competing systems side by side and through the technique of internal focalization lets the characters think and speak for themselves.

The novel within its conventional narrative form conducts another postmodern discussion on history. This is the theme in which the novel questions how history, especially the national or the official one, can be rewritten or adjusted in accordance with the needs and will of the dominant ideology. Thereby, the novel foregrounds the partiality and fictional nature of narratives of the official history. The new order needs to create an alternative version of the official history manufactured and imposed on the people by the previous order. The official history of the old order should be erased or turned up-side down. For this reason, in order for the new order to propagate and create a new version of the official history that part of the official history which covers the rule of the old regime should be brought to trial and be judged. As the representative of that period, the former President is selected as the culprit of this trial which means more than a trial according to Georgi Ganin, the Head of Patriotic Security Forces:

It is important to hold this trial, for the good of the nation. It is equally important that the accused be found guilty. ... the nation expects from this trial something more than a technical verdict of guilty on a charge of minor embezzlement. Which is the direction in which you are heading at the moment, with due respect. The nation expects to be shown that the defendant is the worst criminal in our entire history (TP 127).

Stoyo Petkanov is then put on a trial accused of trivial charges like "deception involving documents, ... abuse of authority, and mismanagement" (TP 50). Disappointed by the frivolous accusations, the four university students reflect these accusations as "'mass murder.' 'Genocide.' 'Ruining the country,' 'mismanagement of the prison camps'" (TP 50). However, Petkanov is well aware that the trial means more than these allegations. He believes that the trial is held to change how the people perceive the past which he believes to be full of glory:

> And now I find myself in a very strange position. ... I find myself in court. I am charged with bringing peace and prosperity and international respect to this country. I am charged with uprooting Fascism, with abolishing unemployment, with building schools and hospitals and hydro-electric dams. I am charged with being a Socialist and a Communist. Guilty, comrades, in every case" (TP 161).

Petkanov defines himself as "the helmsman" of the nation who "sacrificed [his] whole life for the people" (TP 167). He claims that everyone knows that "the real charge" is that he is "a Socialist and a Communist" (TP 167). However, it is not only that he is a Socialist and a Communist that he is tried for, but also, and more important than his political identity, he is the embodiment of the old order. Thereby, his crimes and guilt will be attributed to the old order which necessarily will criminalize and contaminate the history of the old order. This is Peter Solinsky's task as the prosecutor. He has to debase the old order by proving how rotten its history is. He internalizes his mission as he stares at the statue of Alyosha which was gift from the Soviet people to revere the Red Army who had saved the country from the Fascist:

> The morning and evening sun spotlit the distant Alyosha for the city. Peter Solinsky liked to sit at his small desk by the window and wait until he sensed a tremor of light on the soldier's bayonet. Then he would look up and think: that's what has been stuck in the guts of my country for nearly fifty years. Now it was his job to help pull it out (TP 22).

However, the prosecutor can only produce "convenient inventions" to charge Petkanov and they are far from satisfying the desires of the new order; "but it was agreed that a mere two charges were insufficient for such a historic indictment" (TP 167-59). Petkanov, on the other hand, humiliates the prosecutor by revealing the fact

that he betrayed his wife and bought an expensive suit with the State's money. At the moment when Petkanov starts to direct the trial, Ganin, the Head of the Patriotic Security Forces, presents the prosecutor a new document, a memorandum, "just a half-page typed statement with two signatures attached. Not even signatures, initials" (TP 124). The statement in the memorandum describes how to handle the problem of traitors:

> The memorandum concerned the joint problems of internal dissent and external slander. There were exiles abroad paid by the Americans to broadcast lies about the Party and the government over the radio. And there were weak, easily influenceable people at home who listened to these lies and then attempted to propagate them. Slander of the State, under the criminal law, was a form of sabotage, and to be punished as such. It was at this point that Solinsky's translation broke down. The saboteurs, he read, were to be 'discouraged by all necessary means' (TP 125).

Ganin insists that the phrase "all necessary means" can be exploited to associate certain deaths of the notable people, which may also include the death of Anna Petkanov, the daughter of the former president, with Petkanov and his rule. Immediately recognizing the forgery in the document, the prosecutor at first hesitates to use the forged document. However, as the old order makes use of "all necessary means" to eliminate the traitors, the new order also opts for using "all necessary means" to put a stain on the official history of the old order. As his position in the trial gets weaker and weaker, the prosecutor has to resort to the fake evidence. However, he first has to rationalize this dishonest step within himself:

> If Petkanov hadn't signed that memorandum, he must have signed something like it. We are only putting into concrete form an order he must have given over the telephone. Or with a handshake, a nod, a pertinent failure to disapprove. The document is true, even if it is a forgery. Even if it isn't true, it is necessary. Each excuse was weaker, yet also more brutal (TP 151).

After this reasoning, he presents the memorandum to the court and accuses Petkanov of murdering his own daughter. Even though all accusations are approved by the court, Peter Solinsky loses his credibility and respect. "[Petkanov] had lost everything, but he was less defeated than this ageing young man [Solinsky]" (TP 177). The trial also frustrates the university students who try to follow the trial on television despite regular electricity cuts:

We were brought up, weren't we, in school and with the newspapers and television and our parents, or some of them anyway, to think that Socialism was the answer to everything. I mean, that Socialism was right, was scientific, that all the old systems had been tried and didn't work, and that this one, this one we were lucky enough to live under, this one was … correct (TP 98-99).

The new order tries to work on the premises exercised by the former order. In order to introduce a new version of the official history, the new order inherits the exact means by which it condemns the previous system. Within the trial, the official history of the nation is rewritten by the new order which manipulates the truth through forged documents creating, thereby, another fictional version of the history. However, there is nothing new under the sun for the people who still suffer food and petrol shortages, electricity cuts and high inflation. What they witness that can be considered as a change is the new names used for old squares, as in the case of "the Square of St Vassily the Martyr, which had, in the course of the last forty years, also been Stalingrad Square, Brezhnev Square, and even, briefly, in an attempt to get round the whole problem, the Square of the Heroes of Socialism" (TP 75). Another change the people witness is the removal of the statues of Lenin, Stalin, Brezhnev, the First Leader, Stoyo Petkanov from the city centre to the "irrelevant, local, silent" (TP 181) outskirts of the city where they "huddled together in permanent exile, silently discussing policy" (TP 64). Witnessing only the symbolic changes, the people experience disappointments within the cycle of history as each successive system brings along superficial changes to their lives:

There had been a Revolution, of that there was no doubt; but the word was never used. ... This country had the fullest sense of history, but also a great wariness of rhetoric. The high expectations of the last years refused to declare themselves in tall words. So instead of Revolution, people here spoke only of the Changes, and history was now divided into three quiet parts: before the Changes, during the Changes, after the Changes. Look what had happened throughout history: Reformation, Counter-Reformation, Revolution, Counter-Revolution, Fascism, Anti-Fascism, Communism, Anti-Communism. Great movements, as by some law of physics, seemed to provoke an equal and opposite force. So people talked cautiously of the Changes, and this slight evasion made them feel a little safer: it was difficult to imagine something called the Counter-Changes or the Anti-Changes, and therefore such a reality might be avoidable too (TP 62-63).

Within the sample setting of a fictional East European country, Barnes introduces a wider contextual meaning. By playing out Capitalism and Communism, he foregrounds people's wariness of rhetoric which has become the most favourite ideological manipulation tool of the competing systems. He ironically conveys his message in the novel as Devinsky Commando, a student organization, chants in a demonstration, "GIVE US IDEOLOGY NOT BREAD" (TP 68). While the people's real life problems continue to exist, each successive stage of history first resorts to rhetoric in order to introduce symbolic changes to erase the symbolic existence of the previous system. This gesture necessarily includes rewriting of the official history of that nation. Historical truths are distorted, given shape or, if necessary negated in this formation. By conducting such discussions on history, Barnes locates the novel into a postmodern context despite its apparent traditional narrative form.

2.4. England, England

In The Porcupine, Barnes demonstrates how official history of a nation is rewritten through rhetoric within the will of the emerging new order to secure the forging of the new national identity. In England, England, however, Barnes in a thoroughly ironic voice creates a scenario in which the national past is literally turned into a commodity to be sold to tourists within a huge thematic park. Like The Porcupine, the novel is conventional in terms of formal structures which follow linear development. What makes the novel postmodernist is its content which is loaded with postmodern themes including arguments concerning the constructed nature of the official history, loss of authenticity and originality and substitution of it with simulacra. Moreover, in this scenario, Barnes examines the relationship between memory and identity both in individual and national dimensions.

The novel is divided into three parts. The first part, titled "England", introduces the childhood years of Martha Cochrane, the protagonist of the novel. This part foregrounds Martha's self-conscious critical disposition towards history, both national and personal, and memory, and their intricate connection to her personal and national identities. In the following part, titled "England, England," Martha starts to work as a consultant in media tycoon Sir Jack Pitman's enormous investment called England,

England which includes reconstruction of the replicas of the most important landmarks and figures of the English history on the Isle of Wight. The final part, "Anglia," narrates Martha's return and settlement to the Old England which is now called Anglia and has turned back to a condition of primitivism as it has lost its prosperity, history and, thereby, identity to England, England. Within these three parts, Barnes discusses in parallel how individual identity is associated with memory and how collective national identity is related to the official history. However, Barnes problematizes the issue by foregrounding the unreliability of memory and constructed nature of the official history.

Barnes creates a postmodern character in Martha Cochrane who is highly self-conscious, cynical and suspicious towards memory and history. Before moving on to discuss the construction of the national identity fed by the official history, Barnes introduces Martha's childhood years in order first to make a connection between individual identity and national identity. Martha's portrayal as an independent, detached and cynical character helps Barnes illuminate the artificiality and constructedness of both identity tags. Martha's self-awareness is stressed as she tries to come to terms with the idea of "building character":

> She did not understand about building character. It was surely something you had, or something that changed because of what happened to you, like her mother being brisker and more short-tempered nowadays. How could you build your own character? She looked at village walls for bewildered comparison: blocks of stone, and mortar in between, and then a line of angled flints which showed that you were grown up, that you had built your character. It made no sense. Photographs of Martha would show her frowning at the world, pushing out a lower lip, her eyebrows clenched. Was this disapproval of what she saw, was it showing her unsatisfactory 'character' – or was it merely that her mother had been told (when she was a child) that you should always take pictures with the sun coming over your right shoulder? (EE 13-14)

Martha's "frowning at the world" suggests her awareness that not only inner dynamics but also the outer systems are in operation in her character development which makes her standpoint further critical. Therefore, Martha does not approach her memories, or her past, as naively as others do because a memory "wasn't a solid, seizable thing, which time, in its plodding, humorous way, might decorate down the years with fanciful detail" (EE 3). Memories, or the past, cannot be attained in its pure, unbiased form as they are not solid. They are always subject to manipulation throughout

the years with inclusion of the inauthentic details. “If a memory wasn’t a thing but a memory of a memory of a memory, mirrors set in parallel, then what the brain told you now about what it claimed had happened then would be coloured by what had happened in between” (EE 6). For Martha, therefore, there cannot be “a first memory which was not in her opinion a lie” (EE 4). Memories, like any other historical narrations, are partial and limited. Within the years that pass from the exact moment of the memory to the time when it is recalled, the memory loses its authenticity and turns into a fiction.

Barnes further complicates the issue of memory by pointing that despite the awareness of the working principles of memory, the individual still clings to memories in order to make the present liveable. Likewise, while Martha’s reflections on memory prove her critical perspective, she admits that memory is “a continuing self-deception” (EE 6). Paradoxically, as the personally and unconsciously distorted and appropriated versions of the brief moments of the past, memories become one of the most important contributors to the present identity of an individual. “Because even if you recognized all this, grasped the impurity and corruption of the memory system, you still, part of you, believed in that innocent, authentic thing – yes, thing – you called a memory” (EE 6). Through Martha’s case, Barnes displays the individual’s both denial and acceptance of the power of memory in the formation of the identity. Moreover, Barnes also suggests that as the individual needs memories on which to build his/her individual identity, he/she does not only modify and customize memory but also becomes selective for which memory to remember:

> It was like a country remembering its history: the past was never just the past, it was what made the present able to live with itself. The same went for individuals, though the process obviously wasn’t straightforward. Did those whose lives had disappointed them remember an idyll, or something which justified their lives ending in disappointment? Did those who were content with their lives remember previous contentment, or some moment of well-arranged adversity heroically overcome? An element of propaganda, of sales and marketing, always intervened between the inner and the outer person (EE 6).

There is an ongoing negotiation between the inner and outer person concerning which memory to remember and in what way to accommodate it to the present so that the present can be bearable. Despite her distrust in memories, Martha presents her first memory in which she tries to complete her “Counties of England jigsaw puzzle” (EE 4).

Paradoxically, Martha asserts that memory was "true, but it wasn't unprocessed" (EE 6) She defines this memory as "her first memory, her first artfully, innocently arranged lie" (EE 4). However this memory is more than "a fond imagining, or the softly calculated attempt to take the listener's heart between finger and thumb and give it a tweak" (EE 1). She believes in this "arranged lie" because only by this way she can conceal and soften the real tragic event in the actual memory. The tragedy in this memory is that her father always would hide the last piece only to reveal at the end of the game until one day he leaves forever to leave the puzzle incomplete.

The memory of "Counties of England jigsaw puzzle" helps Barnes create a metaphorical association between the national identity and the individual identity. As a child, when Martha looks at the image what she sees is not the map of England but "a bit like a bulgy old lady sitting on a beach with her legs stretched out" (EE 4). However, it is the image of England splintered into counties with different colours. What Martha has to do is to pick the right piece and reconstruct England. This metaphor, then, implies both the fragmented nature of the national identity of England and also its constructed condition. Moreover, that her father always keeps the last piece of the jigsaw puzzle suggests the existence of a patriarchal power in the construction of the national identity:

> whereupon a sense of desolation, failure, and disappointment at the imperfection of the world would come upon her, until Daddy, who always seemed to be hanging around at this moment, would find the missing piece in the unlikeliest place. What *was* Staffordshire doing in his trouser pocket? How could it have got there? Had she seen it jump? Did she think the cat put it there? And she would smile her Nos and head-shakes at him, because Staffordshire had been found, and her jigsaw, her England, and her heart had been made whole again (EE 5-6).

Thanks to her father, who represents the hegemonic patriarchal power, Martha can finish the puzzle and create a complete national identity. As a child who is in her beginning years of personal identity formation, Martha is introduced a further dimension to her identity. Besides, Martha is not the only child playing with the puzzle; "there was often someone else who had had the same jigsaw as a child" (EE 4). Within the corresponding years of individual identity formation, the national identity is imposed on children by their families, or parents, who represent the power. In addition

to the family, the school also has an important function in this formation. Martha, at history classes, where "they were encouraged to an urgency of belief," remembers singing "chants of history" led by their "hen-plump and as old as several centuries" history teacher Miss Mason (EE 11). These chants sing the great events of the English history in rhyme though without any cause and effect relationship. "She led them in and out of two millennia, making history not a dogged progress but a series of vivid and competing moments, beans on black velvet" (EE 12). The curriculum includes "tales of chivalry and glory, plague and famine, tyranny and democracy; of royal glamour and the sturdy virtues of modest individualism" which also included "Sir Francis Drake and his heroic exploits" (EE 11-12). Martha and her classmates are taught that Sir Francis Drake is a hero who undertook heroic exploits for the benefit of England. However, the partiality and subjectivity of the official history is revealed when Martha meets a Spanish girl at the university who, to Martha's shock, asserts that Sir Francis Drake was not a hero but a pirate:

> No he wasn't, because she knew he was an English hero and a Sir and an Admiral and therefore a Gentleman. When Cristina, more seriously this time, repeated, 'He was a pirate,' Martha knew that this was the comforting if necessary fiction of the defeated. Later, she looked up Drake in a British encyclopaedia, and while the word 'pirate' never appeared, the words 'privateer' and 'plunder' frequently did, and she could quite see that one person's plundering privateer might be another person's pirate, but even so Sir Francis Drake remained for her an English hero, untainted by this knowledge (EE 7).

Despite her distrust in memory and, in general, history, Martha does not let her sense of national identity be disrupted by that knowledge. In this sense, Martha is truly a postmodern character who is aware of the functioning principles of the official history but who also allows her identity to be designed by it. It is paradoxical that having developed a critical stance towards memory and history, Martha, as an individual, still requires the shaping powers of history for her identity. When her father abandons her leaving the Counties of England jigsaw puzzle missing one piece, he also causes her national identity to be incomplete.

As if compensating this void, Martha starts to work with Sir Jack Pitman who wants to create replicas of the cultural and historical touchstones of England in a theme park. Barnes devotes the second part of the novel to the development of this theme park.

Mediating on the condition of the real and its inevitable substitution with replica or simulacrum, Barnes demonstrates that the official history of a nation is an artificial construct which propagates the sense of the nationhood. In one of his interviews Barnes explains that:

> We create something from fragments and bits of memory, national memory, and we stick it together with a very rough glue and then once it's been there for a certain time, like a year, we think this is real, this authentic, and then we celebrate it. It's fabulation all over again – convincing ourselves of a coherence between things that are largely true and things that are wholly imagined (2009: 63).

In this sense, Barnes creates an analogy between the national history and the processes of simulacrum delineated by Baudrillard in his Simulacra and Simulation (1981). According to Baudrillard, an image goes through "successive phases" to reach the stage of simulacrum; respectively, "it is the reflection of a profound reality; it masks and denatures a profound reality; it masks the absence of a profound reality; it has no relation to any reality whatsoever; it is its own pure simulacrum" (1994b: 6). Likewise, England, England as a theme park starts as "the reflection" of the definitive features of English identity and history. However, these reflections assume the role of the real as the reflected loses its attraction and popularity to the copy. Finally, England, England transforms into real England as the old one, now called Anglia, falls into oblivion and turns back to primitivism. In parallel with Barnes's argument and Baudrillard's notion of simulacrum, the replicas constructed in the theme park England, England gradually devalue and then take the place of the real object. Sir Jack Pitman, the media tycoon and the investor of the theme park, has also similar understanding of the real:

> 'What is real? This is sometimes how I put the question to myself. Are you real, for instance – you and you? ... You are real to yourselves, of course, but that is not how these things are judged at the highest level. My answer would be No. Regrettably. And you will forgive me for my candour, but I could have you replaced with substitutes, with … simulacra, more quickly than I could sell my beloved Brancusi. Is money real? It is, in a sense, more real than you. Is God real? That is a question I prefer to postpone until the day I meet my Maker (EE 31).

In the capitalist world order epitomised by Pitman, the real is not a sacred thing; it does not even exist. The historical relics of England which constitute the English identity are not exception but commodities to be marketed. His consultant Jerry Batson,

on the other hand, points out that England has advantages in this money-driven world system as it is "a nation of great age, great history, great accumulated wisdom" which holds a place "*what others may hope to become*" (EE 39). Therefore, Batson proposes that "social and cultural history – stacks of it, reams of it – eminently marketable, never more so than in the current climate" (EE 39). Pitman decides to commodify the English history, and for this reason recruits a Concept Development team including historians, intellectuals and also Martha for the post of Special Consultant. Pitman also hires a French intellectual to lay the philosophical basis of the project. Echoing Baudrillard, the French intellectual claims that "we prefer the replica to the original, ... the reproduction of the work of art to the work of art itself" because of "our insecurity, our existential indecision, the profound atavistic fear we experience when we are face to face with the original." (EE 53-54) He further elaborates that the lack of the original and rule of the representation should not be mourned because "it is not a substitute for that plain and primitive world, but an enhancement and enrichment, an ironization and summation of that world" (EE 55). Unlike Baudrillard, the French Intellectual welcomes the spectacle and simulacrum:

> A monochrome world has become Technicolor, a single croaking speaker has become wraparound sound. Is this our loss? No, it is our conquest, our victory. … It is our intellectual duty to submit to that modernity, and to dismiss as sentimental and inherently fraudulent all yearnings for what is dubiously termed the "original." We must demand the replica, since the reality, the truth, the authenticity of the replica is the one we can possess, colonize, reorder, find jouissance in, and, finally, if and when we decide, it is the reality which, since it is our destiny, we may meet, confront, and destroy (EE 55).

Baudrillard associates his discussion of simulacrum with Disneyland as it is "a perfect model of all the entangled order of simulacra. It is first of all a play of illusions and phantasms" (1994: 12). Pitman, on the other hand, asserts that his project is not "Disneyland, World's Fair, Festival of Britain, Legoland, or Pare Asterix" because what he is offering is "the thing itself" (EE 59). Pitman's suggestion of "the thing itself" is not necessarily the original or the real as he only believes in the reality of money. Pitman further clarifies that a reservoir within the following years of its establishment "when fish swim in it and migrating birds make it a port of call, ... when these things happen it becomes, triumphantly, a lake," in other words, "it becomes the thing itself" (EE 61). What Pitman foreshadows is that his project would later supercede the original

and become the thing itself. Within this purpose, he recruits an official historian, Dr Max, to create an alternative history based on the original history of England. Beforehand, Pitman's concept developer Jeff advices the official historian and delineates his task:

> You are our Official Historian. You are responsible, how can I put it, for our history. ... Well, the point of *our* history – and I stress the our – will be to make our guests, those buying what is for the moment referred to as Quality Leisure, *feel better*. ... Less ignorant. ... The point is that most people don't want what you and your colleagues think of as history – the sort you get in books – because they don't know how to deal with it. ... So we don't threaten people. We don't insult their ignorance. We deal in what they already understand.... The Historian is there to advise us on how much History people already know (EE 70).

The history that would be reconstructed on the island will have similarities with the original but should not necessarily be strictly based on the factual records. That history should be in a sense domesticated and tamed in such a fashion that would not intimidate the customers. In other words, the history should be turned into something both alluring and within expectations; something that is marketable and profitable. Pitman orders his concept developer Jeff to conduct a survey to identify "top fifty characteristics associated with the word England among prospective purchasers of Quality Leisure," and, then, wants Dr Max to "find out how much people know" (EE 58). Rather than considering the official and factual historical records, Pitman opts for creating a history within the knowledge limits of the targeted consumers. The list produced as the result of the survey on identifying the fifty key elements describing what is quintessential about the English identity, however, complicates Pitman's project. "The Royal Family, Big Ben/Houses of Parliament and Manchester United Football Club" are top listed among "the Fifty Quintessences of Englishness," (EE 83) which Pitman believes can be feasible in terms of both representation and, more importantly, marketing. However, the list also includes some items which can neither be represented nor marketed like "Snobbery, Phlegm/Stiff upper lip, Hypocrisy, Perfidy/Untrustworthiness, Not washing/Bad Underwear" (EE 84). Prioritizing monetary gain over anything, Pitman either neglects or adjusts these items into a form that can be both representable and profitable. Martha defines the process as "repositioning of myths for modern times" (EE 148). In this context, Pitman assumes the role of the hegemonic power which gives form to the history of a nation. Strictly in

accordance with the Capitalist order, a history is created and imposed on the island in close alliance with commercial interest disregarding factuality.

The official history, thereby, is falsified and distorted to fit into the expectations in order both to create a consensus and contend the consumers and to guarantee the economic success. In a conversation concerning England, England, Barnes explains that:

> Getting its history wrong is also part of creating a nation. You have to build up those myths of liberation, myths of fighting the oppressor, myth of bravery. Often they have a certain percentage of truth in them, so they're easy myths to build up. But then being a nation as well as becoming a nation also depends on the continuation of those myths, which you see in all countries (2009: 59).

This is what Barnes satirizes and parodies within the image of the theme park. Pitman rewrites the official history with regard to the consumer masses that get its history wrong. Justifying Pitman, Dr Max, the official historian claims "that patriotism's most eager bedfellow was ignorance, not knowledge" (EE 82). In this context, Martha's character which is adorned by Barnes with self-awareness for the operating principles of history becomes antithetical to the masses that are quite passive in absorbing the history introduced to them. Pitman is also aware of Martha's cynical nature as he assigns her the role of "an Appointed Cynic. Not a court jester" (EE 44). Martha's struggle in the search for an authentic and well-grounded personal identity is in great contrast with the masses that welcome preordained and tailored identity imposed on them by the hegemonic power. After the establishment of the park the inhabitants of the island, the employers, actors and actresses acting the roles of the historical figures develop an insular patriotism:

> Whereas on the Island a bright and modern patriotism had swiftly evolved. .... Why shouldn't they be impressed by their own achievements? The rest of the world was. This repositioned patriotism engendered a proud new insularity. ... Why slum it where people were burdened by yesterday, and the day before, and the day before that? By history? Here, on the Island, they had learnt how to deal with history, how to sling it carelessly on your back and stride out across the downland with the breeze in your face. Travel light: it was true for nations as well as for hikers (EE 202-203).

Despite the initial commercial and ideological success, a chaotic atmosphere gradually begins to hold over the island as the replicas enter into the phase where they not only mask the profound reality but also assumes the role of that reality. Refusing to sleep in the specified company accommodation, groups of threshers and shepherds insist on sleeping "in their tumbledown cottages, despite the absence of modern facilities available at the converted prisons" (EE 198). They also want their salaries be paid in the artificial island currency "having apparently grown attached to the heavy copper coins they played with all day" (EE 198). What is more, the replica of Robin Hood and his merry men revolt against the Project and terrorize the park and this revolt is then repressed by, similarly artificial, the Island SAS which "biweekly restages of the Iranian Embassy Siege of 1980" (EE 228). Replicas are not anymore domesticated and fabricated versions of the historical figures. As they move out of their predetermined roles and assume the full reality of history they become terrifying and wild proving Dr. Max who claims that "paymasters want reality to be like a pet bunny" because if people are faced with the real thing "they wouldn't know what to do with it" but except to "strangle it and cook it" (EE 133). However, the most awkward case occurs when the actor who acts "Dr. Samuel Johnson" over-identifies himself so strongly with his role that he starts to behave as depressive as Dr. Johnson troubling the customers who come to the park to dine with the historical "Dr. Johnson." When the complaints grow stronger, Martha calls "Dr. Johnson" to her office only to find the actor responding her questions with the very statements of the historical "Dr. Johnson." While the replica "Dr. Johnson" scandalizes the boundaries between the real and the imaginary, his scandalizing of the boundaries between the real and the imaginary cause Martha to question her identity surrounded by such replicas:

> She was no longer a CEO, or a business woman, or even a person of her time. She was alone with another human creature. She felt a strange and simple pain. ... Dr Johnson was not just two centuries older than her, but two centuries wiser. Martha felt she had failed utterly: she had made little impression on him, and he had behaved as if she were less real than he was. At the same time, she felt light-headed and flirtatiously calm, as if, after long search, she had found a kindred spirit (EE 211-212).

During their talk, for a brief period of time, Martha feels that she experienced something authentic, something very close to real than her. She is perplexed as she cannot decide whether Dr. Johnson's case is medical or historical because "the Island

was itself responsible for turning ‘Dr Johnson’ into Dr Johnson, for peeling off the protective quotation marks and leaving him vulnerable” (EE 217). Even though he is an actor in the role of “Dr. Johnson,” Martha senses that “his pain was authentic. And his pain was authentic because it came from authentic contact with the world” (EE 218). For the first time, Martha lets the power of simulacrum to take hold of her. The actor is not anymore the actor, but Dr. Johnson as bearing and welcoming all the complexities of his character. This fuels up Martha’s energy in her search for the possibility of authentic and complete existential mode in the postmodern world, for a “naked contact with the world” (EE 218).

> Later the moment had been appropriated, reinvented, copied, coarsened; she herself had helped. But such coarsening always happened. The seriousness lay in celebrating the original image: getting back there, seeing it, feeling it. This was where she parted company from Dr Max. Part of you might suspect that the magical event had never occurred, or at least not as it was now supposed to have done. But you must also celebrate the image and the moment even if it had never happened. That was where the little seriousness of life lay (EE 238).

At that moment, Martha decides to leave England, England and turns back to Old England which is now called Anglia, and which is also the title of the last part of the novel. According to Childs, “Martha comes to at least wish to slough off her arch bitterness and put her faith in the solemnity of custom and ceremony based on a belief in original culture, however naive, rather than the postmodern play of ‘England, England’” which “signals her return to the past, along with the novel’s” (2011: 121). Martha is now an old lady who desires to settle in a village. However, within the years following the success of the theme park, Old England loses many things, cuts her tie with the rest of the globe, and turns back to the pre-industrial stage:

> Old England had progressively shed power, territory, wealth, influence, and population. Old England was to be compared disadvantageously to some backward province of Portugal or Turkey. Old England had cut its own throat and was lying in the gutter beneath a spectral gas-light, its only function as a dissuasive example to others. FROM DOWAGER TO DOWN-AND-OUT, as a Times headline had sneeringly put it. Old England had lost its history, and therefore – since memory is identity – had lost all sense of itself (EE 251).

Its history robbed by England, England, the Old England loses its identity. As it returns to its past, this provides a chance for the depopulated island to restart again. In

parallel with this, the schoolmaster of the village, where Martha settles, aims to re-establish history and, thereby, create a new sense of identity. Therefore, the third part introduces another attempt at creating a history which ultimately would forge a new form of Anglian identity. What complicates the reconstruction of history in the village is that the village itself becomes a settlement area after the Old England loses its history to England, England. The inhabitants of the village, likewise, are not authentically local both in terms of culture and geography. Like Jez Harris, who was "formerly Jack Oshinsky, junior legal expert with an American electronics firm obliged to leave the country during the emergency" but who "preferred to stay, and backdate both his name and his technology" (EE 243). In a conversation, Barnes explains that he creates a fake village to foreground how history can be reinvented and, then, how it transforms into a supposed reality: "In many ways, it's a completely fake village. It's a bogus village reinventing itself" (2009: 63) Barnes contrasts the methodology of reinventing history in the village with the reconstructed history of the theme park as the schoolmaster insists that "folklore, and especially invented folklore, should not be the subject of monetary exchange or barter" (EE 244). The schoolmaster calls for a revival of "a village Fête" which may help improve the newly developing collective identity. In the organization of the Fête, "an official delegation of schoolmaster and vicar" appeals to Martha who "was known that she, unlike most of the village's current occupants, had actually grown up in the countryside" and "over mugs of chicory and shortbread biscuits they petitioned her for memories" (EE 246). Towards her senior ages, Martha feels defeated in her search for authenticity and this defeat also forces her to modify her self-conscious and critical attitude towards memories and history:

> And eventually she herself fitted into the village, because she herself no longer itched with her own private questions. She no longer debated whether or not life was a triviality, and what the consequences might be if it were ... Nor did she know whether the stillness she had attained was proof of maturity or weariness. ... What held her attention now were the children's faces, which expressed such willing yet complex trust in reality. As she saw it, they had not yet reached the age of incredulity, only of wonder; so that even when they disbelieved, they also believed (EE 257-264).

As the postmodern, self-aware and critical protagonist of the novel, Martha has to come to terms with the postmodern world which only allows the existence of the replicas. Barnes creates Martha as the one individual to stand against the masses. From

her childhood onwards, her reflections on the working of history, her self-conscious and cynical attitude towards memory and its intricate relation with identity separate her from the masses. However, despite her awareness, Martha herself is subject to the powers of history and memory in her identity formation. Barnes shows that while the individual identity is bound to the memories of the individual, the national or collective identity is shaped by the official history. In each case, there is a process of construction, hence, implying that identity is not a given thing but a constructed peculiarity. The novel further complicates the issue of identity formation by revealing that memory and history, which construct individual and collective identity, are themselves constructed entities. While the memory is shaped by psychological determinants of the individual and, therefore, is unreliable, history is modified, adjusted or erased to be rewritten in accordance with the hegemonic power, therefore, is a construct. Thus, in the novel, Barnes implies the impossibility of attaining both the authentic identity and the authentic history in the postmodern world as both of them are in constant negotiation with the dominant power. What the individual and the nations are offered is the reconstructed replicas on which they are allowed to develop their identities.

Within their discrepant forms and contexts, these three novels question how official histories are constructed. In these novels, Barnes foregrounds the processes in which the official histories are shaped and then re-shaped as one ideology overrules the other. Each succeeding ideology reformulates the history either by omitting certain parts which have been favoured by the previous ideology or by highlighting the parts which have been ignored until that moment. Proving Hayden White who claims that histories are verbal accounts, Barnes demonstrates the sequence of events in the past is arbitrarily turned into a narrative, into a form which best serves the ideology. A History of the World in 10½ Chapters voices the suppressed histories of the other against the dominant narratives of the Western patriarchal official history. The Porcupine creates a fictional context in which the Communist official history of a nation clashes with the Capitalist version which is under construction. England, England, on the other hand, presents a dystopic island on which the official history of England is transformed into marketable commodity as if to keep up with the consumerist culture nourished by wild Capitalism. Then, for Barnes, official histories are also human constructs like any other historical narratives.

CHAPTER III

3.1. Personal History

In the thesis, the personal history will refer to the story of one's life covering either certain part or the whole past of an individual. When it is transferred into a fictional or factual narrative form, it is inevitably subjected to the processes similar to other types of historical narratives even if the narrator of that narrative is one of the witnesses to that personal history, or the narrated life story is the narrator's own life. The narration of a personal history totally depends on the narrator's point of view, ideological and psychological outlook and, above all, his/her attitude against the subject of that personal history. If the personal history is narrator's own history, the accuracy and reliability of narration is under the mercy of his/her own memory and certain historical traces on which postmodern theory casts great doubts. Therefore, the narratives of personal histories are the fictional accounts of their narrators, be it first person or third person narration.

The present chapter will analyse three of the selected novels by Julian Barnes, Before She Met Me (1982), Talking it Over (1991) and The Sense of an Ending (2011) in terms of how they contribute to the understanding of how Barnes writes personal history. These three novels are not historical novels in the strictest sense of the concept as they do not involve real life historical figures or refer directly to any historical events. What these novels do present, however, is personal histories of purely fictional characters. Like Barnes's other novels, these three novels are easily distinguished from each other with regard to their forms. Among them, Before She Met Me is the most conventional one with its third person narration which contains a proper beginning, middle and end. In Talking it Over, the reader is confronted with multiple narrators, each taking the floor to narrate the same event in which they also participate within their

own perspectives making the novel the most polyphonic and experimental one. Finally, The Sense of an Ending, his Booker Prize winning novel, introduces a first person narration with a self-aware unreliability. These fictional narratives of personal histories of fictional characters are in parallel with the overall postmodern understanding of history. In all three novels, characters' attempts to create reliable versions of their own or others' personal histories result in fictionalization suggesting the impossibility of attaining an authentic historical account.

When the body of Barnes's publications is considered the most striking aspect is the variety of the forms. Barnes himself reveals that "once you have the idea, the form comes right along" (Barnes, 2009: 20). Therefore, as Barnes attempts to investigate different aspects of human experience it comes right along with a different narrative mode which causes heterogeneity in his fiction. However, heterogeneity is not a casual feature in his fiction since he believes that "in order to write, you have to convince yourself that it's a new departure not only for you but for the entire history of the novel" (qtd. in Childs, 2011: 5). Gregory J. Rubinson suggests "the extremely diverse spectrum of writing styles" of Barnes implies "the idea that traditional forms of historiography offer a limited means of understanding history" (2005: 81). The variety of the forms Barnes makes use of also signifies the novelist's experiments to come up with a satisfying mode of narration to relate the past events. Stylistic differences in these three novels also suggest that no matter it is related in the first or third person, or in monologue form, the personal histories are also open to question in terms of reliability and objectivity and they may be partial, limited or distorted.

While it is true that the three novels that will be analysed in this chapter have different narrative modes, there is one common point that three of them share. Authorial intrusion is never felt in these novels, even in Before She Met Me which is related in the third person narration. As these novels present the personal histories of the fictitious characters, Barnes never makes himself felt during the narration. His self-effacement is an intentional move as he reveals in one of his conversations:

> On the whole the beauty of this form, for a novelist, is that you disappear as a writer. You as a controlling narrator. You leave the reader alone with views of the characters. And the reader makes up his or her own mind (Barnes, 2009: 84).

Peter Childs also confirms that Barnes "would favour anonymity, leaving just 'the words' for the reader" (2011: 2). In a way, as the author diminishes his voice in the text, the reader is brought up against the characters without the author mediating between them. As the fictitious characters try to recuperate their histories, as they try to inscribe meanings on their past events in order to understand their present selves, or as they try to reconcile with their histories, the author steps aside to leave the readers judge for themselves. The author strictly refrains from mediating and creates an atmosphere in which characters seem to speak for themselves. Barnes easily silences the authorial voice in The Sense of an Ending which is related in the first person and in Talking it Over which makes use of an experimental monologue based narrative mode. In the more conventional third person narration of Before She Met Me, the text does not reveal any single moment of authorial intrusion or commentary; only the thoughts and the ideas of the characters are related by passing from one consciousness of a character to the other.

Characters in these novels may not be the type characters but they represent plain fictional characters who have nothing peculiar about themselves. Comparing Barnes's fiction to Rushdie's, Rubinson argues that both share "a concern about the veracity and authority of historical representations" (2005: 77). However, Rubinson adds that unlike Rushdie's characters who "*live* history," Barnes's characters "research history" as they try to "grapple with the 'knowability' of history" and "their experiences are more grounded in the mundane realities of contemporary life" (2005: 77). Within the traditional pattern of triangle love relationship, love, jealousy and betrayal become the recurrent themes of these three novels. They either try to come to terms with their personal histories in order to have better understanding of their present selves, or struggle to keep up with the present by accommodating not only their own histories but also other's histories. In The Sense of an Ending, Tony delves into his past to find answers to the questions coming from his past in order to attain inner peace. In Talking it Over, the members of the triangle love relationship try to play out the versions of others to legitimize their own accounts

In this process, the historical documents either textual as in the form of a letter or a diary, or visual like a photo or a film give shape not only to their present identities but also to their memories. According to Paul Ricoeur, memory has always been thought to "operate in the wake of the imagination" which is "located at the lowest rung of the ladder of modes of knowledge" (2004: 5). For Childs, Barnes's fiction suggests that "the versions and details that inhabit memories are mutable and changeable" since "the most important aspect to memory is that it is imaginative" (2011: 6). In order to make sense out of the disparate memories and compose a coherent personal history, memories are recollected. However, according to Barnes, memory is "constantly interfered by your own rewriting of your own past" (2009: 38). Thus, appearance of a single historical document may easily falsify the recollected memory which causes re-writing of the personal history. On the other hand, one's personal history, or collection of personal memories, inevitably features other people who have different significations for the same past event who, therefore, produce different accounts.

Memory becomes a post-structuralist signifier whose referent is always slippery, arbitrary and inherently subjective. While the knowledge conveyed from such a source is bound to be ambivalent and subjective, the person who tries to relate this knowledge becomes deeply unreliable. The defining and mutual characteristic of the narrators of The Sense of an Ending and Talking it Over is their unreliability as their accounts are constantly falsified either by other accounts or by an unexpectedly revealed historical document. In Before She Met Me, characters become unreliable as they rewrite their past by intentionally omitting certain parts. In these novels, the reader is denied a genuine and objective historical account as memories are reconstructed and restructured either consciously or unconsciously by the narrator or the character who remembers selectively in his/her organization of his/her personal history. These three novels suggest, then, it is impossible to have a singular history but plural histories which are always subjective since narrator/character who tries to relate his/her personal history is inherently unreliable, selective and ideologically situated.

3.2. Before She Met Me

Published in 1982, Before She Met Me is Barnes's second novel which is comparatively conventional as it is narrated in the third person and structured on an easily discernible structure of beginning, rising action and ending. Graham Hendrick, the protagonist, is an academic working in the History department of a university. Divorcing his first wife, Barbara, he marries Ann who once acted minor roles in various films. "The honey time" ends as Graham starts going to watch Ann's all films and becomes obsessed with the relationships she had both on and off-screen before she met him. His retrospective jealousy surmounts to top after discovering that Ann had an affair with their mutual novelist friend, Jack Lupton. Finally, Graham kills Jack and then commits suicide.

Although it is hard to say that the novel is a historical novel proper as it does not contain historical figures, in a way, it does connect its characters to the historical milieu they live in. For Lukács, the historical novel "has to *demonstrate* by *artistic* means that historical circumstances and characters existed in precisely such-and-such a way" (1989: 43). Motivations for the actions of characters should well be established in accordance with the historical necessities. While reading a historical novel, one should "re-experience the social and human motives which lead men to think, feel and act just as they did in historical reality" (Lukács, 1989: 42). The historical novel should therefore constitute a firm basis to communicate the motivations of the characters by relating them to the historical conditions they are exposed to.

The historical milieu of Before She Met Me, which provides not only motivation for actions of the characters but also an explanatory paradigm for the reader, is the sexual revolution of the 1960s. In this novel, then, historical context becomes central in the construction of the personal histories of the characters. Childs argues that the novel "can also be seen as a reactionary novel: an attack on the view that the sexual revolution of the 1960s was uniformly liberating" (2011: 34). Opposing the view that "jealousy is an old theme," Vanessa Guignery identifies the originality of the novel "in the fact that it is written in the wake of the sexual liberation of the sixties, which did not eliminate all difficulties in relationships between men and women" (2006: 21). Barnes himself

points out the sexual revolution of the 1960s as the historical frame out of which the reader can find answers to "how" and "why" questions to be addressed to the characters' motivations:

> In a way it's a sort of anti-60s book. It's against the idea that somehow the '60s sorted sex out, that everyone was all fucked up beforehand, Queen Victoria was still in charge – and then along came the Beatles, suddenly everyone started sleeping with everyone else, and that cured the lot. That's a rough plan of English sexual history, as seen by many people. And I just wanted to say, it's not like that; that what is constant is the human heart and human passions. And the change in who does what with whom – that's a superficial change (Barnes, 2009: 11).

In "Remembrance of Things Past", published in The Observer (1983), Barnes questions "the received wisdom about jealousy" which "suggests that it is reasonably uncommon, largely confined to the callow, and gradually becoming extinct as more enlightened attitudes to sex percolate through society" (1983: 22). In this, he identifies "a major flaw in the hopeful Sixties assumption" which purports "that an increase in sexual traffic produces a decrease in the unpleasant emotions sometimes aroused by the business" (1983: 22). Investigating this flaw further and regarding the ongoing historical process of the sexual revolution, the novel presents two different character models; one like the protagonist Graham who remains in the realm of Queen Victoria and the other embodied by Ann and Jack who experience sexual freedom marked with the arrival of the Beatles. Unable to accommodate himself to this historical development, Graham even cannot master the required vocabulary:

> Masturbation, fornication, defecation: serious words from his childhood, representing activities to be pondered before being indulged in. Nowadays it was all wanking and fucking and shitting, and no one thought twice about any of them. Well, he used shitting himself; a bit, privately. Jack, of course, talked about wanking quite casually, and fucking as well. Graham was still a little tentative about both usages (BSMM 78).

Each development in the history of the world makes itself felt in every aspect of the social life. The taboo words or the slang may well be incorporated into the daily use. Graham's estrangement towards the language of the revolution and his failure in mastering the vocabulary emphasize his inadaptability to the period unlike Ann and Jack. These two models, one who conforms to the historical development brought up by the sexual revolution and the other who cannot come to terms with its consequences

unveil the actual conditions of the life. In this way, the novel locates Graham's retrospective jealousy within a firm historical basis.

> Why did retrospective jealousy exist now, in the last quarter of the twentieth century? Graham wasn't a historian for nothing. Things died out; rages between nations and continents settled down; civilization was becoming more civil: you couldn't deny it, to Graham's eye. Gradually, he didn't doubt, the world would calm down into a gigantic welfare state devoted to sporting, cultural and sexual exchange, with the accepted international currency being items of hi-fi equipment (BSMM 157-158).

The story harbours both tragic and comic elements and it is thematically concerned with the traditional topic of jealousy. For Guignery, "Barnes, however, does not merely reproduce models of the past; he transforms tradition by making Graham's jealousy retrospective" (2006: 21). Moreover, Guignery argues that Barnes reformulates classical tragedy "which employs stock characters (husband, wife and lover) by proposing a variation on the love triangle (husband, wife and her past) and by mixing tragedy and comedy" (2006: 19). Graham's jealousy is fed not by Ann's present but by her past. As a professional historian, he collects historical evidences of any sort to fuel his retrospective jealousy till he has enough clues to take Jack Lupton as a real life rival. Even though the novel's dominant theme might seem like love and jealousy, it is also deeply concerned with the question how personal history is constructed as it depicts a professional historian at work who tries to compose an account of a period of his wife's life in which he is absent. In other words, Before She Met Me is a novel about a professional historian who is literally obsessed with the period of time that her wife spent before she met him. This is important because the novel serves to represent the historians who have to write about a period to which they are not eye-witness and about which they can only resort to surviving traces.

Similarly, the novel's plot construction is woven around a professional historian who constructs an account about a certain part of his second wife's history in which he is absent. Having passed his middle ages, for Graham, life seems to be complete with the sense of security and ordinariness; "fifteen years married; ten years in the same job; halfway through an elastic mortgage. Halfway through life as well, he supposed; and he could feel the downhill slope already" (BSMM 4). In a retrospective glance, he would worriedly perceive "with urgent clarity how beached his life had been at that time"

(BSMM 4). Childs identifies the source of the humour in "Graham's gradual thought-tormented descent into psychopathological violence from his initial security, conveyed by the book's opening lines" (2011: 35). As an academic, Graham is introduced at the beginning of the novel as a man of reason and rationality. He claims to be successful in the arguments with the university students which are carried on "calmly, logically, on a basis of agreed fact" (BSMM 15). However, discussions that take place at home with his first wife, Barbara, lack such basis but contain "a home weave of hypothesis, assertion, fantasy and malice" with the additional "relentless emotional overlay to the argument" which makes things worse for Graham (BSMM 15). As his feelings towards his wife "billowed out like a parachute," at a party organized by their mutual novelist friend, Jack Lupton, he meets Ann, an ex-actress, who represents "his first and only chance" (BSMM 22). Divorcing his wife, Graham marries Ann whose acting history which features minor roles with little eroticism in them would gradually transform the rational Graham into obsessively jealous Graham:

> He envied the things she touched. He was contemptuous of the years he had spent without her. He felt frustrated at not being allowed to be her, not even for a day. Instead, he conducted interior duologues, one part of him acting Ann while another part acted himself. He confirmed from these conversations that they really did get on extraordinarily well (BSMM 23).

Once preferred arguments which revolve around a basis of an agreed fact, Graham starts to fantasize duologues between him and Ann. Despite being a professional historian, Graham is incapable of handling Ann's history without the touch of jealousy. In his article, Barnes describes retrospective jealousy as "a kind of foolish rage against the immutability of the past and a metaphysical whinge at the fact that things can actually happen despite your absence" (1983: 22). In this sense, Childs describes Graham "as an innocent who cannot cope with experience in his own life and in his wife's history" because of being "in many ways ill-equipped to deal with the feelings Ann provokes in him" (2011: 43). Graham cannot mute his new wife's past and things get even worse when Barbara, the first wife, tricks him to watch a film in which Ann has a minor role throughout which she remains in the bed flashing a bare shoulder only. This is the first time Graham watches "his wife commit adultery" (BSMM 1) and it function as "the catalyst sparking it all off" (BSMM 53). Having seen more than a

couple of times all films not only Ann herself appeared but also actors she had scenes together, Graham begins to lose his ability to distinguish fact and fiction:

> He couldn't, today, go to any cinema in London or its immediate suburbs and see a film in which his wife committed adultery; nor could he see any film in which his wife, though remaining chaste onscreen, had committed adultery offscreen with one of the actors. The two categories, he noticed, were beginning to get blurred in his head (BSMM 122).

Graham's case is appropriate to be defined in terms of what Brian McHale defines as "the violation of the ontological boundaries," (1987: 16) though McHale's preliminary aim is to denote the contradictions generated by the trans-world identities of the historical novel. Graham's violation of ontological boundaries occurs as he begins to confuse Ann's fictional ontologies in the film with her real life ontology. Unable to cope with this disorder, Graham resorts to Jack who is the only figure in the novel "who understands the power of the imagination, but controls it for the purposes of writing fiction" (Childs, 2011: 38). Unlike Graham who is stuck not in his past but his wife's past, Jack has a "declared policy of living only in the present involved a stylized forgetting of the past" (BSMM 56-57). As a novelist, Jack is aware of the past's irretrievability, its inaccessibility without the touch of imagination. Therefore, "if asked about his early life, he would either refer you to his fiction, or invent a baroque lie on the spur of the moment" (BSMM 57). On the other hand, Graham, who is expected to be more experienced and attentive in dealing with the past, can no longer make a reasonable distinction between fact and fiction.

As Graham blurs the boundaries, the personal history he tries to compose for his wife becomes highly subjective and unreliable. However, Graham spends days to discover potential evidences for his wife's infidelity as he believes ironically that "there was no point in getting jealous unless you were accurate about it" (BSMM 75). In Hayden White's terms, what Graham tries to do is emplotment; he tries to create a coherent historical narrative out of the disparate historical evidences which he interprets within the light of his retrospective jealousy. According to Alan Robinson, "in historical narrative occurrences are singled out from the plenitude of what actually happened because retrospective interpretation regards them as meaningful within a network of causal relations" (2011: 9). Graham does not construct his network causally or

objectively, but intentionally on the proofs of which he considers as the infidelity of his wife. His historical inquiry is nourished by his retrospective jealousy:

> On his afternoons alone at the house, Graham found himself more and more on the lookout for evidence. Sometimes he wasn't sure what constituted evidence; and sometimes, in the course of his forays, he wondered whether he didn't secretly enjoy finding that proof which he told himself he feared and hated. The effect of his driven searches was to re-acquaint himself with almost all of Ann's possessions; only now he saw them in a different, more tainted light. (BSMM 73-74)

His inquiry becomes "tainted" as his obsession prevents him to construct an objective version. He even defines his approach as "intuitive-pragmatic" (BSMM 173) which clearly foregrounds his use of intuitions rather than his reason. Graham's self-awareness in his methodological shift is noteworthy:

> 'Well, I've always been a words man myself. I would be, wouldn't I? It's always been words that have most affected me. I don't like pictures much; I'm not interested in colours or clothes; I don't even like pictures in books; and I hate films. Well, I used to hate films. Well, I still do, though in a different way, of course' (BSMM 160).

He even questions that how come he "who [has] been untouched by the visual for [his] whole life, suddenly go under like that" (BSMM 162). As a professional historian who boasts of being always a man of word, Graham comes to admit that "the visual is just a lot more powerful than the word" after watching his wife commit adultery onscreen. He becomes so much "visually responsive" that he can hardly remember being happy in the holiday that he has with Ann since he throws away all the pictures, even the negatives: "He remembered that he had been happy on it; but without the visual corroboration of where he had been happy, the memory of that emotion seemed valueless" (BSMM 180). Previously underestimating the film by comparing it to "the artificiality of opera," (BSMM 38) Graham gradually places it at the top of his categorization of historical trace among which are travel maps, advertisements, foreign coins, match boxes of the hotels or restaurants and pictures Ann collected in "Grahamless occasions" (BSMM 74). His pathological issue even leads him to adhere to some sort of corresponding reality to his "sneering dreams" (BSMM 105) in which he sees his wife having sexual intercourses with the film actors

Dreams couldn't be true, could they: that was why they were dreams. There were supposed to be premonitory dreams—the wise man sees a vision of foods, and moves his tribe to higher ground; and in his own civilization, didn't you have dreams before job interviews, warning you against making mistakes? So why couldn't you have post-monitory dreams? It was, if anything, a more plausible concept (BSMM 110).

Under the effect of these dreams, Graham's pathological case worsens. Already having a bare difficulty in differentiating between the relationship Ann had before she met him in terms of on-screen and off-screen and deeply suffering from the inability to cope with the voices coming from his wife's past, dreams begin to haunt him. As these dreams "[stride] carelessly across the barrier of consciousness" (BSMM 105) they also add an extra ontological dimension to be violated by Graham. Dream figures, film figures and real-life figures merge into each other in Graham's reconstruction of his wife's history turning upside down all the ontological levels:

Of course, the Buck of his dream was very different from the Buck of The Rattler and the Rubies. In the dream, he'd been a threatening, coarse fellow; in the film, one of nature's prairie gentlemen. Neither image, Graham assumed hopefully, would be particularly alluring to Ann; but then both of them were false images —one on a screen, one in his head. What was the real Buck Skelton like (what was his real name, for a start)? And maybe that Buck was the one to find favour with Ann (BSMM 111).

In collecting historical evidence to compose a historical account of Ann, Graham is swayed under his imagination and intuition which scandalizes the notion of truth. For Guignery, "Graham takes such fantasies as sources of information, pieces of evidence, if not facts, and thus invalidates the very concept of truth" (2006: 25). As the object of her historian husband's historical inquiry, Ann is appalled at how her past has come to effect her present in this way.

If she had in fact fucked Skelton, she was thinking, Graham wouldn't be making love to me now. How strange the ways in which the past caught up and tugged at the present. What if, all those years ago, when she was making The Rattler and the Rubies, someone had said, 'Let that cowboy have his way with you and some years from now you'll give yourself, and a man you don't even know, a night or two of guaranteed misery (BSMM 115).

The more Graham digs out Ann's past, the less secure Ann feels. However, at the beginning of the novel, during the honey time, Ann admits that "she had sensed an unfamiliar stability entering her life even before she met Graham; now things felt

solider than ever" (BSMM 41). Ann's statements imply maturity and settlement which probably includes a compromise with her past. This lasts till the version of her personal history constructed subjectively by Graham under the effect of pathological retrospective jealousy begins to threaten her present. As she realises that her husband cannot "handle her past," (BSMM 240) she begins to question "why should the past make you crazy with emotion," (BSMM 157) or wonder if one could "unknow the knowledge" (BSMM 183). She clings to the idea that "he was hostile to a past her, to a present situation, but not to a present her" (BSMM 232). After sensing that Graham might discover her past affair with Jack, which is real, she decides to "rewrite [her] past" (BSMM 85). For this reason she goes to Jack telling him she came "to get history straight" which means, in fact, transforming the past: "I've decided we never had an affair" (BSMM 84). In order to protect her present being tormented by the subjective version of her history drawn out by her husband, Ann has no chance but to give a new shape to her history. Her case suggests how histories can be reshaped or manipulated easily at personal will.

As Ann fictionalizes her history intentionally by omitting certain parts of it, Graham turns to fiction to unravel her history. For this, he goes through Ann's library and picks novels of Jack. In other words, Graham attempts to find clues in the fictional world of Jack to prove the affair Ann and Jack had in the real life:

> Pages 367 and 368: Graham ripped them out. The clues were unmissable: the tear in the eye—that had happened a few times; the lifting of the bottom—yes; the clincher, though, was the mole—even if he had moved it from her right shoulder to the left side of her neck (this would be what Jack called imagination). And even if the mole wasn't a clincher, there was the cigarette. Ann often put cigarettes into her mouth the wrong way round. Graham hadn't ever noticed her doing it after they made love, but she'd done it several times when socially flustered. Hadn't Jack been there on one such occasion? And hadn't there been some shared joke he didn't understand? He couldn't quite remember (BSMM 212).

As he skims through the text, he comes across with other clues like "a phrase of Ann's; a description of her breasts; a mannerism while making love; a dress" (BSMM 213). Satisfied with the amount of the clues he gathers from the fictional world, Graham kills Jack and commits suicide. Just before the murder, Graham admits himself that "he might be misunderstood: he might be thought of as merely jealous, merely crackers"

(BSMM 227). Ann also believes that "he was sad; upset; [...] but he wasn't jealous" (BSMM 240). Graham's problem which also generates his pathologic jealousy is that he cannot conform to the historical period in which he lives unlike Ann and Jack. He simply cannot keep up with the relationship traffic emerged as the consequence of the sexual revolutions of the 1960s. He longs for the day of his childhood, "back before Ann and Jack and Barbara, back to the time when there had only been his parents to pacify; the years before betrayal existed, when there was only tyranny and subservience" (BSMM 214). With the act of murder and suicide, Graham declares his choice of unconformity to the historical necessities of his time. For Graham, Jack and others "accepted the defeat," but he knows he cannot accept it and "would never be able to" (BSMM 214).

Although Before She Met Me seems like a conventional novel in terms of narrative mode and character development, "the debate which it triggers on the blurring of ontological frontiers between fiction and reality, as epitomised by the coexistence of a history lecturer and a fiction writer, is typically postmodernist" (Guignery, 2006: 26). The novel creates an inherent paradox by displaying a professional historian attempting to produce a personal historical account with the aid of highly problematic tools like his imagination rather than his reason and with the assistance of the historical traces which are open to suspicion. The paradox is developed further as this professional historian is placed side by side with a novelist which highlights the historian's pitiable position in his struggle to differentiate fact and fiction. For Childs, the novel is "about slippage between reality and textual analysis in the construction of personal narrative: an imperfect jigsaw puzzle of attempted objective and willed subjective observation, insight and extrapolation, invention and fact" (2011: 8). Graham's construction of personal narrative of Ann's history is full of flaws in which fact and fiction merges into each other.

The novel locates invention at the heart of historical fact and suggests that historical accounts are fictional stories of the historian. Historical narratives, be it official, religious or personal, are at the mercy of the narrator historians who at some point have to resort to the faculty of imagination in interpreting the historical trace. Unavoidable act of interpretation entails subjectivity raising the question of reliability. Moreover, it

may result in the production of discrepant versions of the same event even if it is narrated by the eye-witnesses which is the case Barnes makes use of both stylistically and thematically in Talking it Over.

3.3. Talking it Over

Barnes's sixth novel, Talking it Over introduces pluralized pasts through monologues which differ according to the positions taken by unreliable narrators. Three narrator protagonists and various secondary characters alternately take in charge of the narration of the same chain of events, thereby, creating three distinct conflicting discourses which compete for authority and authenticity. The novel is about a love triangle. Major characters are Oliver, Stuart and Gillian. Oliver and Stuart are very close friends. Stuart falls in love with Gillian and they get married. However, Gillian leaves Stuart for Oliver. Then, Stuart heads for America while Gillian and Oliver move to France. After a while, Stuart comes to France to watch over the couple. Realising this, in order to make Stuart leave in peace, Gillian fakes a scenario which shows the couple in fight.

Similar to Before She Met Me and The Sense of an Ending, this novel is also constructed on the conventional triangular love relationship but adorned with an experimental narrative strategy. The same historical event is presented to the reader in monologues which are not like a diary or letters; they sound rather as confessionals and they are addressed to an ambiguous listener or narratee using direct references like "you". This technique is very close to what David Lodge defines as "skaz" in The Art of Fiction:

> *Skaz* is A RATHER APPEALING Russian word (suggesting "jazz" and "scat", as in "scat-singing", to the English ear) used to designate a type of first-person narration that has the characteristics of the spoken rather than the written word. In this kind of novel or story, the narrator is a character who refers to himself (or herself) as "I", and addresses the reader as "you". He or she uses vocabulary and syntax characteristic of colloquial speech, and appears to be relating the story spontaneously rather than delivering a carefully constructed and polished written account (1993:18).

For Lodge, through this technique, an illusion can be created which "creates a powerful effect of authenticity and sincerity, of truthtelling" (1993:18). The narrators in the novel have indeed claims to have authority and truthful story in comparison to the others. In other words, narrators create competing historical discourses which try to undermine and delegitimate the other. The existence of competing discourses side by side in the same text causes generation of multiple versions of the same historical event, which is truly postmodern. As history becomes the discourse of the historian in the postmodern age this peculiarity of history indicates its inevitable ideological positioning due to ideological situatedness of both the historian and the historical trace or the documents on which historical discourse is established.

The historical trace, on the other hand, becomes a social construct, or a postmodern signifier, which does not carry meaning but on which meanings are imposed by an ideologically situated historiographer whose discourse is shaped by complicated sets of power relations. Hutcheon asserts that, "historiographic metafiction self-consciously reminds us that, while events did occur in the real empirical past, we name and constitute those events as historical facts by selection and narrative positioning" (1995: 97). Therefore, instead of logocentric and linear narration of the past, postmodern fiction questions the authentic historical knowledge and methods of relating it through contradictions, discontinuities, gaps and ruptures.

As this novel also suggests, postmodern fiction introduces pluralized pasts which differ according to the positions taken by the unreliable narrators whose ideological agendas shape their discourses. Therefore, every account of a given period remains impartial, inadequate, limited and constrained. This is not a feature that practitioners of historiographic metafiction are embarrassed of; it is a source to be exploited. They do not hesitate to introduce multiple historical accounts in a single text which are in conflict with each other and which jeopardize the authenticity of the other even if they are "eye-witness" to the events they are relating. In her The Politics of Postmodernism, Hutcheon claims that "even an eye-witness account can only offer one limited interpretation of what happened; another could be different" (2002: 76). This might be caused by "many things, including background knowledge, circumstances, angle of vision, or what is at stake for that witness" (2002: 76). It is, therefore, significant that

the novel starts with an epigraph, a Russian proverb: "He lies like an eye-witness." It is as if a precaution to the readers. With the epigraph Barnes undermines the reliability of narrators and troubles their accounts from the very beginning. Though, the narrators start their recitals in a self-confident manner

Stuart My name is Stuart, and I remember everything (TO 3).
Gillian Just because I don't have a confessional nature doesn't mean that I forget things. I remember my wedding ring sitting on a fat burgundy cushion, Oliver leafing through the telephone directory looking for people with silly names, how I felt. But these things aren't for public consumption. What I remember is my business (TO 10).
Oliver I'm Oliver, and I remember all the *important* things. The point about memory is this. I've noticed that most people over the age of forty whinge like a chainsaw about their memory not being as good as it used to be, or not being as good as they wish it were... My way with memory is to entrust it only with things it will take some pride in looking after... So I believe in coddling my memory, just slipping it the finer morsels of experience" (TO 11).

In a sense, the reader is at the mercy of three distinct voices which claim authenticity while undermining the other. It is certain that the three competing discourses will introduce not a "History" with capital H, but histories in plural which is very postmodern. Their histories cannot be compromised or reconciled but will remain in eternal conflict. Postmodern historiographer, E. H. Carr clarifies that "it used to be said that facts speak for themselves. This is, of course, untrue. The facts speak only when the historian calls on them: it is he who decides to which facts to give the floor, and in what order or context" (1987: 11). The histories presented, then, are constructs which narrators can omit, edit, manipulate, distort for their own interests. In Foucaldian sense, three distinct discourses compete for power and these discourses create histories in conflict as they manipulate perception of the past. This power game is played to gain the favour and the acceptance of the reader and to be acknowledged as the authentic narrator. In this pursuit what they have in storage is their memory. However, Oliver himself problematizes this source:

Oliver But I don't remember. I *won't* remember. Memory is an act of will, and so is forgetting. I think I have sufficiently erased most of my first eighteen years, puréed them into harmless baby food. What could be worse than to be dogged by all that stuff? The first bicycle, the first tears, that old teddy with a chewed-off ear. It's not just an aesthetic matter, it's practical as well. If you remember your past too well you start blaming your present for it. Look what they did to me, that's what caused me to be like

this, it's not my fault. Permit me to correct you: it probably *is* your fault. And kindly spare me the details (TO 12).

Memory is an act of will. So, it is up to the narrator and he may choose whatever he prefers to relate and forget what he deems unnecessary. "All past 'events' are potential historical 'facts,' but the ones that become facts are those that are chosen to be narrated. […] This distinction between brute event and meaning-granted fact is one with which postmodern fiction seems obsessed" (Hutcheon, 2002: 72). Brute events are manipulated into various forms within the subjective histories of the narrators of the novel. Therefore, the same historical moment are introduced differently. For instance, both Oliver and Stuart present the commencement of the friendship differently. Their friendship starts at high school when Oliver asks Stuart to lend him some money to which Stuart accepts on condition that : "Five percent simple interest on the principal per week, repayment within four weeks otherwise the interest rose to 10 percent per week" (TO 21). According to Stuart's account Oliver paid the whole money back with the additional interest. But Oliver's version does not include the payment of the interest. Another and more important conflict appears in the narrative when Oliver declares his love to Gillian. Both have very different things to narrate, though:

Oliver: So what happened was this. I rang the door-bell, holding my flowers spread across both outstretched forearms. I did not want to appear like a delivery man. Rather I was a simple, a frangible petitioner, assisted only by the goddess Flora. Gillian opened the door. This was it. This was it.
'I love you,' I said.
She looked at me, and alarm put to sea in her tranquil eyes. To calm her, I handed over my bouquet, and quietly repeated, 'I love you.' Then I left (TO 90-91).

Gillian's account is rather different:

'Oliver!' I said. 'What a surprise. Come in.'
But he stood there, trying to say something. White as sheet, and holding his arms out as rigid as a shelf. His lips moved, and some noises came out but I couldn't make sense of them. It was like films when people have a heart attack … I looked at Oliver and he seemed in genuine distress … his face was frighteningly lacking in colour, he was trembling, and his lips seemed to be sticking together as he tried to speak …
He … stood there with his arms sticking out, like a robot butler without a tray to carry. Suddenly, and very loudly, he said,
'I love you' (TO 93-94).

The novel does not present a monolithic history but plural histories as such with the existence of various voices. Each discourse in the novel turns upside down the other creating a conflict and thereby, none of them can claim authorial superiority. Then, to whom the reader can trust? The only thing the reader has is the text and there is nothing beyond it. The sole criterion for judgment is the linguistic competence of the narrators; in other words, their persuasiveness and their use of language, their success in speech act. If it had been old good days of modernity, if the referential nature of language was believed in as Saussure did, the reader could feel at home as he would have total trust in the subject, or enunciator and in language. But this was before Derrida, before he deconstructed the privilege position of speech over writing by invalidating the presence of the enunciative subject. This is what the reader of the novel has at hand; dethroned, invalidated speech of already unreliable narrators. In this sense, the three narrators exhibit different styles of language use. Stuart uses short sentences which are direct to the point. Gillian's, on the other hand, has a carefree tone with a more relaxed manner which gradually develops towards the end of the novel. Oliver's is the most embellished, flamboyant, remarkable and artistic one. Stuart is clearly aware of his characteristic language use:

> We're rather different, Oliver and me, as you might have noticed. … Oliver impresses people, he talks well, he's travelled to distant lands, he speaks foreign languages, he's conversant with the arts – more than conversant - and he dresses in clothes which don't fit the contours of his body and are therefore declared to be fashionable by people in the know. All of which isn't like me. I'm not always very good at saying what I mean (TO 19-20).

Stuart also lacks self-confidence which describes Oliver's discourse:

> I don't have what is referred to as an out-going personality. When I meet people I like, instead of saying more and showing I like them and asking questions, I sort of clam up, as I don't expect them to like me. Or as if I'm not interesting enough for them… Half of the world seems to have confidence and half of the world doesn't, and I don't know how to make the jump from one half to the other. In order to have confidence you have to be confident already: it's a vicious circle (TO 22-23).

Oliver is the most articulate and communicative of the trio. He plays with the language; he makes cultural references, witty phrases, employs metaphors. He emerges as the dominant figure in the novel at first. However, the discourses of the other two

undermine his credibility. For instance, when Oliver claims that he quitted his job, Stuart argues for something different: "A year or two ago I would have believed him, and maybe the truth would come out a few months later. But now I instinctively thought, Oh no you didn't Ollie, you didn't resign, you got sacked" (TO 72). As if aware of his diminishing credibility and confidence, Oliver begs the reader not to turn their faces away:

> …I probably shouldn't be telling you all this if I want to keep your sympathy. (have I got it in the first place? Hard to tell, I'd say. And do I want it? I do, I do!) It's just that I'm too involved in what's happening to play games – at least, to play games with you. I'm fated to carry on with what I have to do and hope not to incur your terminal disapproval in the process. Promise not to turn your face away: if *you* decline to perceive me, then I really *shall* cease to exist. Don't kill me off! Spare poor Ollie and he may yet amuse you! (TO 88).

The seemingly most authorial and dominant voice of the novel is reduced to a begging tone for acknowledgement. But why is there not any omniscient third person voice that would provide a secure zone for the reader to judge who is telling the truth? Why is the narration transferred to unreliable narrators who manipulate historical events and hence, create histories in conflict? This is the picture of the interaction between postmodern historiographic metafiction and the postmodernist history. For Gertrude Himmelfarb, the postmodernist history "is a denial of the fixity of the past, of the reality of the past apart from what the historian chooses to make of it, and thus of any objective truth about the past" (1997: 158). What is more important, and also best describes the conflict in the novel, is her claim that "postmodernist history recognizes no reality principle, only the pleasure principle – history at the pleasure of the historian" (1994: 158). Traditional expectations like authority, absolute truth, objectivity fall prey to "the frailty, fallibility and relativity of the historical enterprise" (Himmelfarb, 1997: 159). The relativity of the historical enterprise is the key to the conflict in the novel. In this sense, Gillian's profession, restoration of old paintings, implies this understanding of fallible history. Gillian's job is to clean the dirt, dust or overpaint from the painting to reveal its original status. Claiming that "words don't always hit the mark," Gillian is enthusiastic about her work since "there aren't any words involved" (TO 119). It is an artistic rather than a scientific job since it is up to the restorer to decide on the final condition of the painting as "there's no way of knowing exactly" (TO 120). The

discussion about Gillian's job between Oliver and her summarizes the point of the novel's narrative style. Oliver asks:

'You mean, if you cut that picture up into four – which would be a distinctly pro-life act if you want my opinion – and gave it to four different restorers, they'd each stop at a different point?'
'Yes. I mean, obviously they'd all get it roughly back to the same level. But it's an artistic rather than a scientific decision, when to stop. It's something you feel. There's no "real" picture under there waiting to be revealed, if that's what you mean' (TO 122).

With regard to the novel, the reader is confronted with three different restorers who start and stop at different times to reveal not the singular history, but their histories in plural. Oliver's response to Gillian's remark clarifies the reason of the existence of competing narrators in the novel which presents histories in conflict:

It is, oh it is. Isn't that wonderful? Oh effulgent relativity! There is no 'real' picture under there waiting to be revealed. What I've always said about life itself. We may scrape and spit and dab and rub, until the point when we declare that the truth stands plain before us, thanks to xylene and propanol and acetone. Look, no fly-shit! But it isn't so! It's just my word against everybody else's! (TO 122).

In this "effulgent relativity" there are only words. It is the subjective, or even solipsist perspectives which decide on the real. Within the plethora of conflicting narratives of the three unreliable narrators, the negotiation is cancelled. Is there a way to overcome the conflict and reach reconciliation? In the sample of this novel it seems impossible due to the existence of multiple points of views which undermine each other's hierarchical superiority. What the novel suggests is the inaccessibility of the historical truth. History, then, becomes a site of conflict which includes multiple stories of the individuals. Each individual with distinct ideological agenda and cultural background, as in the novel, develops his own history which enters into a conflict with the account of the other.

In Before She Met Me, Graham constructs a highly subjective account of a period of his wife's history in which he has to resort to the historical traces as he is not the eye-witness. Even though they are eye-witnesses to the event they narrate, the narrator-protagonists of Talking it Over also produce subjective accounts distorted and adjusted by self-interest and personal pride. Being blinded under the strong effect of

love and jealousy, neither Graham nor Gillian, Stuart and Oliver are aware of their partiality, limited point of view and flaws in their accounts. On the contrary, they consider their accounts to be the authentic and objective version. Unlike them, in The Sense of an Ending, Barnes introduces a narrator-protagonist, Tony, who becomes highly self-conscious about his limitations and his unreliability as he embarks to reconcile with his past.

3.4. The Sense of an Ending

Tony Webster, in The Sense of an Ending, tries to compose his history and his account is falsified several times during the narration as certain historical documents in the form of a letter or a photo are introduced. He, then, has to reshape his past or has to come to terms with his past. Throughout his narration, he constantly foregrounds his own suspicions concerning his memory. However, he has to reckon on his memories which constantly frustrate his account. Does his failing memory make him a liar or an unreliable narrator?

By the same token, postmodern fiction questions the possibility of presenting an accurate account of the past and the use of unreliable narrator is one of the commonest techniques in this questioning. Wayne C. Booth was the first to establish a theoretical background for unreliable narrator. According to Booth, a narrator is reliable "when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms), unreliable when he does not (1983: 158-9). Lodge, on the other hand, claims that "unreliable narrators are invariably invented characters who are part of the stories they tell" and used "to reveal in an interesting way the gap between appearance and reality, and to show how human beings distort or conceal the latter" (1993: 154-5). Considering the perception of reality and its representation in the postmodern age, these definitions seem lacking. Greta Olson, in 2003, brought together formulations proposed by the theoreticians like Booth and Nünning and drew out three main similarities. He concludes that these formulations share (1) a reader who recognizes a dichotomy between (2) the personalised narrator's perceptions and expressions and (3) those of the implied author (or textual signals) (2003: 93). However,

historiographic metafiction incorporates unreliable narrators who exceed these definitions. While it is true that the use of unreliable narrator in fiction has a long tradition predating postmodernism, the unreliable narrators of postmodern fiction are different compared to their previous counterparts. Very much befitting to the highly self-reflexive and metafictional qualities of historiographic metafiction, the unreliable narrators of such novels are paradoxically self-conscious of their limited points of view, partiality, subjectivity, self-interest and prejudices. Hutcheon claims that history and fiction are discourses which "constitute systems of signification by which we make sense of the past" (1995: 89). As argued by Foucault, historical meanings are not embedded in the events but in the systems by which we try to come to an understanding of historical events. Hutcheon further proposes that

> The postmodern, then, effects two simultaneous moves. It reinstalls historical contexts as significant and events determining, but in so doing, it problematizes the entire notion of historical knowledge. And the implication is that there can be no single, essentialized, transcendent concept of "genuine historicity" (as Fredric Jameson desires), no matter what the nostalgia for such an entity (1995: 89).

If historiographic metafiction denies the idea of a genuine historical knowledge, then it should also deny the existence of any reliable narrator. Each metafictional narrator then turns out to be unreliable as Saleem in Midnight's Children or Stevens in The Remains of the Day. Tony Webster, the unreliable narrator of The Sense of an Ending, tries to reinstall the historical context of his past memories. However, in this pursuit Tony himself problematizes the notion of secure and stable historical knowledge. Therefore, it can be argued that the novel becomes an essay on compelling task of relating historical knowledge through inadequate and deceptive documentation and this essay denies existence of any kind of reliable narrator.

The novel is divided into two parts. The first part is very much like a conventional Bildungsroman in which Tony starts to relate his past beginning from his early schooldays "where it all began" as he puts it, up to his forties. This part introduces Tony's early school years and Adrian's entrance to their life. Then, his problematic affair with Veronica, their breaking up and the beginning of Veronica's and Adrian's affair to which Tony gives his blessing with a supposedly gentle letter, Adrian's suicide, Tony's marriage and divorce. In the second part, the reader feels the presence of the

past given in the first part. This second part is Tony's reading of his past within the axis of the present accompanied by certain historical documents. This part undermines not only the authenticity of the previous part but also frustrates Tony's attempts to reconcile with his past. However, a careful reading of the first part presents clues as to what sort of expectations to be created for the second part. For instance, the very beginning of the novel presents powerful clues as to what type of narrator the reader is confronted with:

I remember, in no particular order:
—a shiny inner wrist;
—steam rising from a wet sink as a hot frying pan is laughingly tossed into it;
—gouts of sperm circling a plughole, before being sluiced down the full length of a tall house;
—a river rushing nonsensically upstream, its wave and wash lit by half a dozen chasing torchbeams;
—another river, broad and grey, the direction of its flow disguised by a stiff wind exciting the surface;
—bathwater long gone cold behind a locked door.
This last isn't something I actually saw, but what you end up remembering isn't always the same as what you have witnessed (SE 3).

The novel opens where Tony triggers his mind to form an account out of memories and the list includes snapshots from these memories which come to surface at the first instant. This is a modest proclamation of Tony as the narrator: "If I can't be sure of the actual events any more, I can at least be true to the impressions those facts left. That's the best I can manage" (SE 4). The historical events are now far gone and only possible remnants are the impressions. Then, through metafictional gestures from the very beginning, Tony acts as an unreliable narrator who is highly self-conscious of his own unreliability. He is well aware that being witness to certain events does not qualify one as reliable. In Hutcheon's words, "the interaction of the historiography and the metafictional foregrounds the rejection of the claims of both "authentic" representation and "inauthentic" copy alike, and the very meaning of artistic originality is as forcefully challenged as is the transparency of historical referentiality" (1995: 110). Even though what is narrated by Tony himself is his own history to which he is the most important eye-witness, it is again Tony who denies the reader the comfort of the authentic representation. History might be "the lies of victor" or "self-delusions of the defeated," as well (SE 16). For Tony's enigmatic and philosopher-type friend

Adrian, "history is that certainty produced at the point where the imperfections of memory meet the inadequacies of documentation" (SE 17).

As if in a dialogue, Tony is well aware of the existence of the reader and his position as the narrator. Unlike an omniscient narrator, he highlights his defects, partiality and situatedness which are the defining characteristics of a postmodern historiographer. Tony quotes his enigmatic and philosopher-type friend Adrian to stress this central problem of history:

> That's one of the central problems of history, isn't it, sir? The question of subjective versus objective interpretation, the fact that we need to know the history of the historian in order to understand the version that is being put in front of us (SE 12).

For Hutcheon, "knowing the past becomes a question of representing, that is, of constructing and interpreting, not of objective recording" (2002: 70). In the postmodern age, it seems naive to believe in representing "what actually happened", a task Ranke once proposed (2011: 86). Historiographic metafiction points out that interpretation has always remained in historiography as "in the choice of narrative strategy, explanatory paradigm, or ideological encoding" (Hutcheon, 2002: 70-71). Therefore, historian's personal traits, his ideological position, his ambitions are important in understanding the version he proposes. If it is a personal history, as in this novel, the damages suffered by the historian throughout his life become paramount in the construction of the history. This is at least what Tony proposes in a direct address to the reader:

> I certainly believe we all suffer damage, one way or another. ... Some admit the damage, and try to mitigate it; some spend their lives trying to help others who are damaged; and then there are those whose main concern is to avoid further damage to themselves, at whatever cost. And those are the ones who are ruthless, and the ones to be careful of. You might think this is rubbish—preachy, self-justificatory rubbish. ... You might even ask me to apply my "theory" to myself and explain what damage I had suffered a long way back and what its consequences might be: for instance, how it might affect my reliability and truthfulness. I'm not sure I could answer this, to be honest (SE 44-5).

Mimicking Freud's theory on repressed memories, Tony proposes that in the name of self-preservation we develop certain methods to cope with the damages and this may result in repression and omission of certain memories. This attitude results in a history reconstructed in terms of one's own psychological preferences to avoid further

damages. As Tony also admits, this raises the questions of reliability and truthfulness to which Tony cannot come up with an answer. Tony's damage is Veronica. For this reason, his memories related in the first part concerning Veronica seems highly subjective. During their affair, Tony always feels uncomfortable. His tension grows as he feels insufficient for her. Veronica's upper middle class upbringing and her well-tamed artistic pleasures concerning music and visual arts, his unpleasant weekend visit to her over-the-standards mansion lead Tony to question his own standards. Her withdrawn and reserved manners against him and Tony's sense of inferiority bring their relationship to an end. However, the major damage occurs when Tony receives a letter from Adrian which announces his affair with Veronica and kindly requests Tony's blessing. This gives great damage to Tony because Adrian is the philosopher friend Tony admires and aspires.

This damage is superficially related in the first part by Tony very much in compliance with "the damage theory." In accordance with the characteristics of Bildunsgroman, Tony seems to mature towards the end of the first part. The second part, however, reveals the magnitude of the damage Tony has suffered for real. Tony is now in his sixties. While the first part is about Tony's memories beginning from his early school years to his forties, the second part introduces his mature years in which certain documents haunt him in his struggle to come to terms with the memories related in the first part. In other words, the first part is Tony's past while the second part is his present which is shaped and then re-shaped with the revealed documents. It is the moment when Tony feels the presence of the past in the present. According to Hutcheon:

> That border between past event and present praxis is where Historiographic metafiction self-consciously locates itself. ... Past was real, but it is lost or at least displaced, only to be reinstated as the referent of language, the relic or trace of the real (1995: 146).

Mediating between the past and the present, Tony continues his narration. During the narration in the second part, however, the frequency of the questions raised towards Tony's reliability increases. At one point, he admits that when he first met Margaret he did "slightly odd thing" as he "wrote Veronica out of [his] life story" (SE 69). When he believes that their relationship has been settled he reveals the truth:

The odder part was that it was easy to give this version of my history because that's what I'd been telling myself anyway. I viewed my time with Veronica as a failure—her contempt, my humiliation—and expunged it from the record. I had kept no letters, and only a single photograph, which I hadn't looked at in ages (SE 69).

It is apparent, then, that Tony applies his "damage theory" on Veronica aiming to repress memories which give harm. Tony does not tell lies only to Margaret, or the reader, but also to himself. However, the past he desires to omit haunts him as one day, he receives a letter indicating that he was left £500 and two "documents" from Mrs. Ford, Veronica's mother. Later he learns that the document is Adrian's diary now in the possession of Veronica and his unyielding search for the documents starts. He explains he is determined in his search because: "The diary was evidence; it was—it might be—corroboration. It might disrupt the banal reiterations of memory. It might jump-start something—though I had no idea what" (SE 77). After a long labour, he receives not the original but a photocopied fragment from the diary which relates Adrian's intellectual exercise concerning accumulation and loss in life and which ends with the sentence: "So, for instance, if Tony..." (SE 86). The revealed document increases tension rather than bringing some solutions. Tony does not give up and asks for more and Veronica, who is very much unwilling to share the diary, provides Tony again with a photocopied document which turns out to be the letter written by Tony years ago to Adrian and Veronica in respond to their affair:

Dear Adrian—or rather, Dear Adrian and Veronica (hello, Bitch, and welcome to this letter),
Well you certainly deserve one another and I wish you much joy. I hope you get so involved that the mutual damage will be permanent. I hope you regret the day I introduced you. And I hope that when you break up, as you inevitably will—I give you six months, which your shared pride will extend to a year, all the better for fucking you up, says I—you are left with a lifetime of bitterness that will poison your subsequent relationships. Part of me hopes you'll have a child, because I'm a great believer in time's revenge, yea unto the next generation and the next. See Great Art. But revenge must be on the right people, i.e. you two (and you're not great art, just a cartoonist's doodle). So I don't wish you that. It would be unjust to inflict on some innocent foetus the prospect of discovering that it was the fruit of your loins, if you'll excuse the poeticism. So keep rolling the Durex onto his spindly cock, Veronica. Or perhaps you haven't let him go that far yet? (SE 95-6)

The unexpected and unpredictable content of the letter shocks the reader as well as Tony who has been telling lies and inventing a past. He explains that "when we are young, we invent different futures for ourselves; when we are old, we invent different pasts for others" (SE 80). What Tony does is to invent a past also for himself. Having confronted with the documents, Tony loads fresh meanings to the photo that shows Alex, Collin, Adrian and Veronica together, another historical document. For the first time in the photo he perceives Adrian and Veronica getting closer to each other.

Towards the end of the novel, Veronica takes Tony to meet a group of disabled people which includes a man named Adrian. To the disappointment of Tony who at first believed Adrian to be Veronica's son, it is revealed that the disabled man is Veronica's brother, her mother's son. Tony figures out, then, Adrian and Veronica's mother had an affair which leads to the birth of the disabled Adrian. However, Tony's figuration still sounds unreliable since the reader is not given any clue concerning the real father. What remains is "great unrest" as suggested by the last sentence of the novel.

At one point in the novel, Tony suggests that "the history that happens underneath our noses ought to be the clearest, and yet it's the most deliquescent" (SE 60). Common sense dictates that being an eyewitness to certain events makes one credible enough to have confidence, at least in the court of law. Is the memory of the eyewitness reliable? For Tony, memory becomes "a thing of shreds and patches" which resembles to the black box of aeroplanes. "If nothing goes wrong, the tape erases itself. So if you do crash, it's obvious why you did; if you don't, then the log of your journey is much less clear" (SE 115). Tony, then, becomes the ultimate embodiment of the unreliable narrator of historiographic metafiction. He is highly self-conscious of his own limitation and subjective interpretations. More than several times he stresses that "this is [his] reading now of what happened then" (SE 41). Time modifies thoughts, understandings and always brings up fresh insights. Time modifies, alters, deconstructs thoughts, ideas and continuously brings up fresh insights, which in turn undermines the possibility of having a reliable narrator. Functioning as an essay on attaining and relating historical knowledge, the novel suggests the denial of any kind of reliable narrator.

The Sense of an Ending and the other two novels analysed in this chapter invalidate the reliability of the narrator making each narrative problematic and flawed. In these three novels, Barnes experiments with different forms as if trying to come up with an ultimate form by which the past can be narrated accurately. However, the accuracy of the accounts is always threatened by the act of subjective interpretations of the historical traces because the narrator or the composer of that historical account constantly falls prey to his/her ideological and psychological position. It is therefore all historical accounts as presented in these three novels are bound to be limited, partial and subjective. The most common point that the three novels share is the unreliability of either their character or the narrators who constantly frustrate the reader as their accounts are falsified or proven inaccurate. In other words, concomitant with the postmodern theories of history and in parallel with Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction Barnes shows how histories are made and remade again and again in a postmodern context.

CHAPTER IV

4.1. Biographical History

This chapter will analyse Julian Barnes's biographical fictions, The Flaubert's Parrot (1989) and Arthur and George (2005). In The Flaubert's Parrot, Barnes introduces character Geoffrey Braithwaite, an amateur biographer, embarking on a quest to compose an authentic biography of Gustave Flaubert. What Geoffrey produces in his first person narration is the reading of Flaubert's life and fiction in parallel with his own life. In its complex structure, Arthur and George presents biographies of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and George Edalji, two disparate figures of history whose lives intersect for a brief period of time. The novel is furnished with the factual records like letters and flavoured by Barnes's fictional input. In both novels, he violates the boundaries that separate biography and fiction insisting on the impossibility of recovering one's life authentically. Similar to the other forms of historical narratives, biography for Barnes incorporates interpretation, personal input, fictionalization and point of view. In his each novel, he exhibits a constant urge to use different forms of fiction as if to test how the past can be best narrated. Playing this time with the genre of biography, conventionally regarded as one of the most faithful forms in the narration of the historical records, Barnes undermines the belief in the authentic narration of a historical subject's life.

In its basic formulation, biography is a life account of a historical subject edited by a writer who consults to the relevant historical documents like letters, photographs and diaries. De Groot defines biography as "a collage of well-chosen fact arranged by the writer to create semblance of order and to 'contain' their subject" (2009: 38). Considering the life of the subject, "a biographer makes sense of incoherence, imposes a framework" which fundamentally *contains* a life, attempts to explain, account for and

map it out" (2009: 38). For E. H. Carr, while biography "treats man as an individual," history "treats man as part of a whole" which may "suggest that good biography makes bad history" (1987: 46). In The Truth of History, C. Behan McCullagh describes how a comprehensive biography is produced:

> To produce a comprehensive biography, historians begin at the subject's birth and end with their death, and give a more or less chronological account of all they did and suffered in between. Selection can be a real problem for such biographers, especially when there is a lot of information available about their subject. The criteria they commonly adopt to guide their selection are designed not just to provide a comprehensive account of the subject at a certain level of generality, but also to allow the historian to mention facts about the life which are of historical and present significance (2003: 7).

These facts are drawn from the historical documents which comprise the raw material of the biographer. McCullagh allows some degree of subjectivity in the inferences the biographer imposes on these facts. "The inferences which historians draw from evidence are, of course, couched in their own concepts, and usually reflect their interests" which, however, "does not prevent their being true," because "there is often more than one way of presenting the subject" (2003: 84). Assuming a humanist approach, McCullagh posits that the biographers are still objective in their explanations "of the activities of the subjects of their biographies," as "they usually adopt, quite uncritically, the view of human nature which is commonly shared" (2003: 101). However, biography is a problematic form which invites both epistemological and aesthetic controversies. In The Seductions of Biography, Marjorie Garber provocatively asks; "Is history a tape loop?" (1996: 177). Retrieving one subject's history authentically and objectively is not that easy. There are inevitable silences and gaps in the subject's life to which the biographers cannot have access. One of the strongest oppositions to biography's claim to objectivity is voiced by Stanley Fish who, comparing autobiography to biography, claims that while "autobiographers are authentic necessarily," biographers "can only be inauthentic, can only get it wrong, can only lie, can only substitute their own story for the announced story of their subject" (qtd in Tridgell, 2004 : 166). Defending the biography against such accusations, Susan Tridgell suggests that if a biography somehow could manage to present a "microscopically faithful" account, then it "would be exact replica, in which case the

very purpose of representation would be lost" (2004: 167). Therefore, objectivity should not be inserted into the discussion to devalue the form:

> What each biography offers is not objectivity, but an argument, an argument for seeing a self in a certain way. Each biography argues for a particular view of a self; more broadly, each biography relies on a particular concept of 'the self', seeing selves in relation, or as autonomous, as disembodied or embodied, as defined by inner experience or by deeds. The biographer's view of his or her subject is always seen through 'a particular pair of eyes', and is a view which may be usefully challenged by subsequent biographers. This way of looking at biography means that the provisionality of biography can be seen as a strength. There need be no demand for objectivity or for completeness; ... such demands are based on illusions about the nature of biography (2004: 187).

The demand for objectivity in the biography form is illusion because it is the re-creation of the subject's life within the writer's perspective. For Tridgell, "biographies too are works of art; they do not show the person 'as he was', but as he is seen 'through a particular pair of eyes'" (2004: 26). Similarly, Linda Hutcheon also posits "history, biography, autobiography — no less than fiction - are discourses, human constructs, signifying systems. This is the lesson of the postmodern" (1999: 4). Within postmodernism, biography becomes the historical discourse of the writer who moulds the subject's life accordingly with his/her ideology, point of view and perspective. It becomes the point where fact and fiction merge into each other. However, for Marjorie Garber, "that biography - and, even more, autobiography - is a species of fiction-making is a truth so old that only a willed cultural amnesia can make it new" (1996: 175). The major impact of postmodernism on the genre of biography for Garber is the constant violation of the borderlines that separate those realms:

> If poststructuralism bequeaths to biography the question of the split subject, postmodernism acts out that ambivalent bequest, testing and transgressing the borderline between 'fiction' and 'reality' or 'fiction' and 'nonfiction' in novels, films, and popular culture (1996: 176).

Historiographic metafictions, like Barnes's The Flaubert's Parrot and Arthur & George, also constantly trespass these borderlines. Through parody and self-reflexive gestures, these novels exploit the realm of biography to claim it within the realm of fiction. For Hutcheon, historiographic metafiction self-consciously blends the fictive with the factual to "challenge the borders we accept as existing between literature and

the extra-literary narrative discourses which surround it: history, biography, autobiography" (1995: 224). This movement is in parallel with the postmodern theories of history which claim that all historical narratives are inherently fictional and which deny the possibility of attaining an objective, accurate and authentic narration of the past without the touch of ideological and subjective contamination. As if in communication with such theories, historiographic metafictions play with other forms of narrative through parody to test their validity. The result does not introduce new forms but rather postmodern hybrid forms:

> But generic borders are also losing their comforting defining power, as fiction, history, biography, autobiography, and other genres mix to create hybrid forms that, for some, simply recall the early days of the novel's formation and, for others, foretell the death of the novel - once again (1999: 4).

Within the postmodern fashion of eclecticism of genres, fiction, biography and autobiography interpenetrate into each other creating hybrid forms: "Fiction looks like biography (Banville's Kepler), autobiography (Ondaatje's Running in the Family), history (Rushdie's Shame)" (Hutcheon, 1995: 60). Likewise, Barnes brings fiction and biography together in his historiographic metafictional novels, The Flaubert's Parrot and Arthur and George. Being self-conscious about the difficulty in narrating the past, Barnes incorporates biographical elements into his two novels to stress the fictionality in the biography form. Within this incorporation, Barnes mixes fact and fiction by introducing historical facts and records to his narrations.

4.2. Flaubert's Parrot

Published in 1984, Flaubert's Parrot is Barnes's first stylistically experimental novel in which the author pushes the conventional biography form to its limits. Within fifteen chapters, concentrating on the characteristics of biography writing in general, Barnes compiles multiple forms, from autobiography to essay, literary criticism to travel guide, from even dictionary to exam paper. All these disparate forms, however, function to foreground the processes of biography writing. In other words, through these plays in form, and by foregrounding the processes that a biographer goes through in writing a biography, Barnes introduces metahistorical biography. His protagonist, Geoffrey

Braithwaite, a retired doctor and amateur biographer who has keen interest in Gustave Flaubert's works and life, takes the road to France to compose a biography of Flaubert. Throughout Braithwaite's journey, Barnes demonstrates how a biographer approaches the historical subject preloaded with personal prejudices and external knowledge. While the personal input of the biographer customizes the biography, the inevitable distortion and deterioration of the historical records and relics within passage of years, as symbolized by the stuffed parrot in the novel, makes it impossible to have an authentic account.

In "The Follies of Writer Worship" (1985), appeared in The New York *Times* one year after the publication of the novel, Barnes reports how astonished he had been on "a studious pilgrimage" to Gustave Flaubert's hometown to witness that the two different museums had pretended to have the authentic stuffed parrot which had stood on Flaubert's desk while he had been writing his short story, "A Simple Heart." While "the first parrot had made [him] feel in touch with the master," the second one "mocked [him] with a satirical squawk" as if asking "what makes you think you can seize hold of a writer that easily" (Barnes, 1985: 1). The authenticity of one parrot is undermined by the existence of the other suggesting the difficulty of having access to pure and uncontaminated historical fact. Barnes also cites other problems with the conventional biography form:

> Each new biography is another layer of papier-mache applied to the funeral mask, making the features more stylized. It is another layer of holy turf added to the tumulus, burying the writer even further underground. Worse, the come-lately biographer is forever condemned to that dutiful trudge in the footsteps of his predecessors, reinterpreting here, questioning there, being a little more judicious, being fair. I wanted to write about Flaubert, though in quite what form I didn't as yet know. All I knew was that I didn't want to be fair or judicious; I wanted the process, and the result, to be somehow more active, more aggressive (1985: 1).

The form Barnes has in mind is beyond the limits of conventional biography. Approvingly, Flaubert's Parrot with its innovative form which comprises multiple forms does not only subvert the chronological narrative of the conventional biography but also disturbs its supposed objectivity. In 2005, when Barnes penned an article, titled "When Flaubert Took Wing," for The Guardian to mark the 20th anniversary of the novel, he affirms that in the novel he tests "constraints of traditional narrative" to see "how far

[he] could distort and fragment the narrative line" (2005: 1). As a true admirer of Flaubert, Barnes also clarifies how the idea of the novel first occurred:

> I can identify exactly the moment at which the novel began - even if I didn't recognise it myself at the time. I had first read Madame Bovary at about 15; had done a special paper on Flaubert at university; and felt that at some point I would want to write about him. All I knew was the sort of book I didn't want to write - any kind of biography, for instance, or something in that charmingly illustrated Thames & Hudson series about writers and their worlds (2005:1).

As if hinting that conventional biographies written to depict the life and the works of artists purport to have the keys to unlock the way for a complete understanding, Barnes warns: "Don't think you can get in touch with the artist as easily as that" (2005: 1). In order to undermine the conventional biography, Barnes intends to create a form which would be a "mix of fact and fiction, something which might be elastic and capacious," and in this form "an at times attenuated fictional infrastructure would support a factual superstructure" (2005: 1). The factual superstructure of the novel is comprised of Flaubert's life, his letters and quotes, while the fictional infrastructure runs along with Geoffrey Braithwaite whose life is greatly in parallel with Flaubert's life.

Barnes makes Geoffrey Braithwaite undertake his task of creating a revolutionary biography of Flaubert. For this reason, Braithwaite literally follows the same road that Barnes took in real life in his visit to the hometown of Flaubert where the novel's idea flickered in Barnes's mind. As Barnes did in his "studious pilgrimage," Braithwaite first muses on Flaubert's statue which is the replica of the original one because "the Germans took the first Flaubert away in 1941" (FP 11). Braithwaite notes that as Flaubert's house was already demolished and the statue will eventually decay due to corrosion, nothing would be left to remind him but "paper, ideas, phrases, metaphors, structured prose which turns into sound" (FP 12). In other words, what would remain of Flaubert are not his material belongings but his works and his ideas. Although Braithwaite sets out to compose a biography of Flaubert, he paradoxically questions the readers' great interest in the lives of the writers:

I begin with the statue, because that's where I began the whole project. Why does the writing make us chase the writer? Why can't we leave well alone? Why aren't the books enough? Flaubert wanted them to be: few writers believed more in the objectivity of the written text and the insignificance of the writer's personality; yet still we disobediently pursue. ... What makes us randy for relics? Don't we believe the words enough? Do we think the leavings of a life contain some ancillary truth? (FP 12)

Implying the arguments on "the death of the author," Braithwaite, indirectly Barnes, proposes that the readers should be satisfied with the text only. This was a lesson Barnes learned when he met with the two parrots: "You may feel 'close' to a writer when you walk round his house and examine a lock of his hair, but the only time you are truly close is when are reading words on the page" (Barnes, 2005: 1). Moreover, biographies, as a form of historical narration, cannot have claims to produce a totality of a writer's life. Braithwaite points this deficiency of biography by resembling it to "a net" which "is a meshed instrument designed to catch fish," but which might also be defined as "a collection of holes tied together with string" (FP 38). Biographies also operate like a net; while it catches something, there are also many things that escape it:

You can do the same with a biography. The trawling net fills, then the biographer hauls it in, sorts, throws back, stores, fillets and sells. Yet consider what he doesn't catch: there is always far more of that. The biography stands, fat and worthy—burgherish on the shelf, boastful and sedate: a shilling life will give you all the facts, a ten-pound one all the hypotheses as well. But think of everything that got away, that fled with the last deathbed exhalation of the biographee. What chance would the craftiest biographer stand against the subject who saw him coming and decided to amuse himself? (FP 38)

This is a self-contradictory remark if the overall project of the novel is considered. However, what Barnes plans to create is a form that is beyond the conventional biography. In this context Portrayal of Braithwaite by Barnes as a biographer who is self-conscious about not only his own deficiencies but also about the hazards lurking in any type of historical narration is significant. More than one time, Braithwaite asks "how do we seize the past?" (FP 14, 90, 100) and, throughout the novel, he tries to find an answer to this question. "The past" in question is not only Flaubert's life, but it also signifies Braithwaite's personal life, especially the story of his wife, Ellen, her infidelities and suicide. By reading his own life story in parallel with Flaubert's biography, Braithwaite also tries to come to terms with his own history

hoping to understand her wife. Yet, Braithwaite is aware that the past is not easy to catch-up with:

> When I was a medical student, some pranksters at an end-of-term dance released into the hall a piglet which had been smeared with grease. It squirmed between legs, evaded capture, squealed a lot. People fell over trying to grasp it, and were made to look ridiculous in the process. The past often seems to behave like that piglet (FP 14).

The past always escapes further away disappointing those who want to grasp it. For Braithwaite, it is like "a distant, receding coastline," and people "are all in the same boat" trying to see the past using telescopes, "if the boat is becalmed, one of the telescopes will be in continual use; it will seem to tell the whole, the unchanging truth." (FP 101) However, this is illusion since boat is in constant motion sailing away from the coast. For Barnes, it is the same as biography writing. While the past moves away, the biographer's view gets blurred and varies since each telescope "brings the shore into focus at a given distance" (FP 101). The past is a desired object which is hard to catch. On the other hand, the biographer can only glimpse it from a distance and there are only historical records on which he can create his account. As Hutcheon claims, the past "can be known only from its texts, its traces – be they literary or historical" (1995: 125). The most stressed historical trace left from Flaubert's life is, as the title of the novel suggests, the stuffed parrot which is believed to be inspirational force for Flaubert during the creation of "A Simple Heart." As Barnes once did, Braithwaite goes to see the parrot in Hotel-Dieu. Upon seeing the "unexceptional green parrot, preserved in a routine yet mysterious fashion" Braithwaite feels "ardently in touch with this writer" (FP 16). His joy and certainty is interrupted when he comes across another supposedly authentic stuffed parrot in the Croisset Museum. Even though Braithwaite speculates that "the second seemed less authentic than the first, mainly because it had a more benign air," (FP 21) he cannot determine which one is the authentic parrot:

> I wondered if somebody knew the answer. I wondered if it mattered to anyone except me, who had rashly invested significance in the first parrot. The writer's voice — what makes you think it can be located that easily? Such was the rebuke offered by the second parrot (FP 21-22).

The suspense concerning the authenticity of the parrots remains unresolved until the end of the novel. Later on, Braithwaite analyses some of Flaubert's photographs: "I

kept reminding myself that he had fair hair. It's hard to remember: photographs make everyone look dark" (FP 15). The photograph, black and white in colour, is far away from presenting a complete image of the writer. Later, in the Croisset Museum, Braithwaite finds "a lock of hair, blonder, naturally, than in the photographs" (FP 21). The photograph, the lock of hair and the two stuffed parrots are the remnants of Flaubert's life. However, the photograph does not yield a complete image of the writer as the lock of hair proves. On the other hand, Braithwaite himself is not sure in what way the lock of hair and the two stuffed parrots, competing for authenticity, can be put into use for a better understanding of Flaubert. Yet, he sends letters to the authorities to find out which one is the authentic parrot.

The narration is interrupted in the second chapter, titled "Chronology," as Barnes introduces three different chronologies of Flaubert's life. These chronological lists are what Hayden White defines as "chronicle" which is "the arrangement of the events to be dealt with in the temporal order of their occurrence" (1975: 6). The historian, then, turns the chronicle into stories using emplotment for which White identifies four different modes; "Romance, Tragedy, Comedy, and Satire" (1975:7). The Romance as a mode suggests "a drama of self-identification symbolized by the hero's transcendence of the world of experience, his victory over it, and his final liberation from it" (1975: 8). The first chronology is apt for Romance mode as the list exalts the writer's life recounting his accomplishments from birth to death as the entries suggest:

1821
Birth of Gustave Flaubert, second so of Achille-Cléophas Flaubert, head surgeon at the Hôtel-Dieu, Rouen, and of Anne-Justine-Caroline Flaubert, née Fleuriot. The family belongs to the successful professional middle class, and owns several properties in the vicinity of Rouen. A stable, enlightened, encouraging and normally ambitious background. (FP 23)
...
1880
Full of honour, widely loved, and still working hard to the end, Gustave Flaubert dies at Croisset (FP 27).

While the first chronology reflects positive aspects of the writer's life, the second chronology, contradictorily, focuses on the writer's both literary and financial failures, deaths, sorrows and sufferings. Thus, the second chronology is suitable for the

tragic mode since “there are no festive occasions, except false or illusory ones” (White, 1975: 9).

1817
Death of Caroline Flaubert (aged twenty months), the second child of Achille-Cléophas Flaubert and Anne-Justine-Caroline Flaubert. (FP 27)
...
1880
Impoverished, lonely and exhausted, Gustave Flaubert dies. Zola, in his obituary notice, comments that he was unknown to four-fifths of Rouen, and detested by the other fifth (FP 31).

The third chronology is suitable for satiric emplotment which signals that “man is ultimately a captive of the world rather than its master,” and “human consciousness and will are always inadequate to the task of overcoming definitively the dark force of death, which is man’s unremitting enemy” (White, 1975: 9). Unlike other two chronologies, the third one starts not from his birth. The list is comprised of Flaubert’s own sentences:

1846
When I was still quite young I had a complete presentiment of life. It was like the nauseating smell of cooking escaping from a ventilator: you don’t have to have eaten it to know that it would make you throw up. (FP 32)
...
1880
When will the book be finished? That’s the question. If it is to appear next winter, I haven’t a minute to lose between now and then. But there are moments when I’m so tired that I feel I’m liquefying like an old Camembert (FP 37).

Another peculiarity of these lists is that they stress the possibility of multiple interpretations of single line of events. The arrangement of this sequence of events into a story line depends on the biographer’s choice of emplotment mode, which yields multiple interpretations. However, Braithwaite picks neither of them to follow in his construction of Flaubert’s biography. Even though he wants to create a new form, and even though he is well aware of the limitations of the conventional biography, he occasionally acts like an old style biographer. Accidentally, in a bookshop he meets Ed Winterton, an unsuccessful American academician. A year later, Winterton sends a letter to Braithwaite in which he declares he now possesses a material proving the mysterious relationship between Flaubert and Juliet Herbert, the English governess to

Flaubert's niece. Braithwaite is thrilled to hear the news because "Juliet Herbert is a great hole tied together with string" (FP 40). She has remained one of the greatest hidden parts of Flaubert's life because "not a single letter to or from her has survived" (FP 40). The case of Juliet Herbert is crucial because she symbolizes the point where the biography comes to a halt due to "the shortage of evidence" (FP 40). Beyond her, there is only speculation. While some biographers indicate she is not that important in the writer's life, "others conclude from this absence precisely the opposite, and assert that the tantalising governess was certainly one of the writer's mistresses, possibly the Great Unknown Passion of his life" (FP 40). In terms of biography writing, Braithwaite implies this might provide an important clue to understand Flaubert's life and his relation to England. However, he is sometimes overwhelmed by his ambition and cannot help imagining himself "presenting it in one of the more important literary journals" under the title of "Juliet Herbert: A Mystery Solved, by Geoffrey Braithwaite" (FP 41). When they meet, Ed Winterton reveals that the material is the correspondence between Flaubert and Juliet Herbert, even including some photographs; "very revealing about Flaubert. Full of nostalgic descriptions of home life at Croisset" (FP 47). However, to Braithwaite's disappointment, Winterton also reveals that he has burnt all the material because Flaubert in his last letter wanted Herbert to do so:

> So you see, of course, I didn't have any alternative. I mean, if your business is writers, you have to behave towards them with integrity, don't you? You have to do what they say, even if other people don't. ... There was also something else in this last letter of his. A rather strange instruction on top of asking Miss Herbert to burn the correspondence. He said, If anyone ever asks you what my letters contained, or what my life was like, please lie to them. Or rather, since I cannot ask you of all people to lie, just tell them what it is you think they want to hear (FP 47-48).

Winterton's heroic act signifies the ethics in biography writing. After all, letters, photographs and other personal belongings are the privacy of the writer. Flaubert wanted them to be destroyed and Winterton's act is the fulfilment of one's final wish which, however, enrages Braithwaite: "I wanted to tell Winterton how really pleased I was that the British had burnt the White House to the ground" (FP 47). Braithwaite's reaction is self-contradictory as in his earlier statements he asks "Why does the writing make us chase the writer? Why can't we leave well alone?" (FP 12). As the case of

Juliet Herbert becomes one of the biggest fish that escapes through one of the holes of the net, Braithwaite decides to "chase the writer" to uncover the mysterious case:

> This seemed strange, assuming that the maniac was telling the truth. But then Gustave did burn much of his correspondence with Du Camp. Perhaps some temporary pride in his family origins had asserted itself and he didn't want the world to know that he had nearly married an English governess. Or perhaps he didn't want us to know that his famous devotion to solitude and art had nearly been overthrown. But the world would know. I would tell it, one way or another (FP 47).

The reappearance of the case of Juliet Herbert in the final chapter of the novel serves to increase the contradictions in Braithwaite's ideas concerning biography. Edmond Ledoux, a biographer of Flaubert, claims that Herbert was actually Flaubert's fiancée. Having himself seen a bunch of correspondence proving their relationship, Braithwaite accuses the biographer of spreading gossip:

> His first unwelcome utterance is the assertion that Flaubert actually became engaged to Juliet Herbert. Ledoux claimed to have seen a copy of La Tentation de saint Antoine inscribed by Gustave to Juliet with the words 'A ma fiancée'. Odd that he saw it in Rouen, rather than in London, where Juliet lived. Odd that nobody else ever saw this copy. Odd that it hasn't survived. Odd that Flaubert never mentioned such an engagement. Odd that the act would run diametrically counter to what he believed in (FP 180-181).

For Braithwaite, Ledoux is a "fantasist" who has tendency to "spread gossip" (FP 180). Ledoux's case demonstrates a biographer who resorts to fiction making when the historical records are insufficient or lacking. Winterton's ethical act of burning the correspondence between the writer and Herbert makes the case of Juliet Herbert one of the blind spots of Flaubert's life on which biographers can only produce hypotheses by resorting to their faculty of imagination. On these blind spots fact merges into fiction. In a conversation, Barnes asserts he is "frequently made uncomfortable and even disapproving of the certainties with which biographers describe lives" (qtd. in Guignery, 2006: 45). For this reason, Barnes makes Braithwaite focus on the uncertain blind spots of Flaubert's life on which he can only speculate. In the third chapter, "The Flaubert Bestiary," Braithwaite associates Flaubert with certain animals; bear, camel, parrot or dog. He tries to find out which one best matches his identity. While this task is obviously a trivial one, Braithwaite laboriously creates a long list of animals using

Flaubert's letters and works. Despite the tedious efforts, Braithwaite fails in his task as he ultimately reaches to a blind spot and terminates each case with the same confession: "What happened to the dog is not recorded" (FP 63-64). In the ninth chapter, entitled "The Flaubert Apocrypha," Braithwaite goes one step further in his interest in the blind spots by visiting fields that can never be known but can only be imagined. In this chapter, he attempts to compose an apocryphal bibliography listing the books that Flaubert could have written. Out of Flaubert's various letters, he tries to pick certain ideas that could have been turned into a novel:

> All these unwritten books tantalise. Yet they can, to an extent, be filled out, ordered, reimagined. They can be studied in academies. A pier is a disappointed bridge; yet stare at it for long enough and you can dream it to the other side of the Channel. The same is true with these stubs of books (FP 121).

After he completes the apocryphal bibliography by classifying them as autobiography, fiction and translation, Braithwaite starts composing "the apocryphal life, the not-life" of Flaubert (FP 124). In other words, Braithwaite questions what would have happened "if Gustave himself had changed course" (FP 121). Braithwaite lists Flaubert's fantastic speculations and momentary decisions regarding the course of his life starting from the age of seventeen to the age of thirty-five:

> At eighteen, he decides that some freakish wind must have mistakenly transplanted him to France: he was born, he declares, to be Emperor of Cochin-China, to smoke 36-fathom pipes, to have 6,000 wives and 1,400 catamites; but instead, displaced by this meteorological hazard, he is left with immense, insatiable desires, fierce boredom, and an attack of the yawns (FP 122).

The apocryphal life terminates when Madame Bovary is published. "The reason is clear: the real life has really begun" (FP 124). Braithwaite implies that as Flaubert establishes himself as an eminent writer with the publication of Madame Bovary, "the fantasies are no longer needed" (FP 125). Those fantasies would now be "practical fantasies" and would be transferred into his fiction (FP 125). In other words, they would be visible and obvious in his work.

In the final chapter of the novel, Braithwaite turns back to what he deems as the most important blind spot of Flaubert's life, to "the Case of the Stuffed Parrot" which,

he explains, took "almost two years to solve" (FP 180). However, it is gradually revealed towards the end of the chapter that there is no solution. Braithwaite revisits the two museums and takes photographs of each supposedly authentic parrot to compare them with Flaubert's description of it in "The Simple Heart." After a strict analysis, Braithwaite decides the parrot at the Hôtel-Dieu is the real one because of "the blue forehead and the golden throat" (FP 186). This appears to be a quick decision when Braithwaite is informed by M. Lucien Andrieu, a Flaubert scholar, who reveals that there are fifty other parrots in the Museum of Natural History and both Hôtel-Dieu and the Croisset took their respective parrots from this museum. Similar to what Braithwaite performs in order to identify the authentic parrot, Andrieu states that the two museums "did the logical thing, the intelligent thing" and "chose the parrot which looked most like [Flaubert's] description" given in the book (FP 187). However, for Andrieu, these efforts do not guarantee the authenticity of the parrot:

'Well. You have to remember two things. One, Flaubert was an artist. He was a writer of the imagination. And he would alter a fact for the sake of a cadence; he was like that. Just because he borrowed a parrot, why should he describe it as it was? Why shouldn't he change the colours round if it sounded better? Secondly, Flaubert returned his parrot to the Museum after he'd finished writing the story. That was in 1876. The pavilion was not set up until thirty years later. Stuffed animals get the moth, you know. They fall apart. Félicité's did, after all, didn't it? The stuffing came out of it' (*FP* 188).

The problem of authenticity, therefore, is not solved; with the information provided by Andrieu it even gets complicated and Braithwaite has to acknowledge that the case of the parrot would remain a mystery forever. However, Braithwaite's given ideas concerning the impossibility of attaining an authentic historical knowledge contradict with his relentless search for the authentic parrot. From the very beginning of the novel, he is self-conscious about the futility of his search. Under the factual superstructure of the novel, Flaubert's life after which Braithwaite runs in futility, is hidden the fictional infrastructure of Braithwaite's autobiography in which the infidelities and the ultimate suicide of his wife, Ellen, is narrated:

Three stories contend within me. One about Flaubert, one about Ellen, one about myself. My own is the simplest of the three—it hardly amounts to more than a convincing proof of my existence—and yet I find it the hardest to begin. My wife's is more complicated, and more urgent; yet I resist that too (FP 85-86).

Barnes clarifies that "my narrator Geoffrey Braithwaite is about to tell you a load of stuff about Flaubert because he is unable to tell you the real story he is loaded down by." (2005: 1) His questioning of Ellen's betrayals and suicide is carried on with little remarks and her story is not revealed until the thirteenth chapter. Braithwaite retards his wife's story because he both escapes his own reality and also wants the reader to be prepared: "I want you to be prepared: that's to say, I want you to have had enough of books, and parrots, and lost letters, and bears" (FP 86). In order to escape the reality of his life, he takes shelter in the life and works of Flaubert: "Ellen's is a true story; perhaps it is even the reason why I am telling you Flaubert's story instead" (FP 86). Although the chapter starts with Braithwaite's declaration that "this is a pure story, whatever you may think," (FP 160) later he confesses that he has to "hypothesise a little" and "fictionalise" (FP 165). He gradually loses his confidential tone and starts hesitating; twice he restarts narration. He again resorts to Flaubert and his novel, Madame Bovary:

> Did she display the cowardly docility which Flaubert describes as the characteristic of the adulterous women? No. Did she, like Emma Bovary, 'rediscover in adultery all the platitudes of marriage'? We didn't talk about it… Did she find, in Nabokov's phrase, that adultery is a most conventional way to rise above the conventional? I wouldn't have imagined so: Ellen didn't think in such terms (FP 164).

Furthermore, while Emma Bovary is "brought down by money," Braithwaite claims that his wife "was never like that" and nor "did she accept gifts" (FP 165). It is obvious that Braithwaite strictly refrains from associating his wife's infidelities with Emma Bovary's. Even though he avoids an apparent identification of the two women, he makes a great effort to understand Ellen and their relationship by looking at Emma Bovary and Flaubert. That is why Braithwaite turns to Flaubert's books, to find an explanation:

> Ellen. My wife: someone I feel I understand less well than a foreign writer dead for a hundred years. Is this an aberration, or is it normal? Books say: She did this because. Life says: She did this. Books are where things are explained to you; life is where things aren't. I'm not surprised some people prefer books. Books make sense of life. The only problem is that the lives they make sense of are other people's lives, never your own (FP 168).

This is a self-contradictory remark because Flaubert's Parrot is a novel in which things are not explained properly. Braithwaite gets to work to create a biography of Flaubert. Despite his awareness of the tricky nature of any type of historical record and the difficulty in producing an authentic historical narration, he is occasionally trapped by the appeal of certainty. The novel does not provide the reader with certainties neither about Flaubert nor about betrayals of Braithwaite's wife. Rather it demonstrates the processes of biography writing which is inherently full of uncertainties. While the novel acknowledges the reader's instinctual chasing of the writer, it also shows the vainness and the futility of such endeavour. The novel conveys this idea by introducing not a conventional biography but a metahistory of biography in which the steps the biographer has to take are laid bare. The novel goes beyond the conventional biography by denying being a "papier-mâche" of the previous biographies. Thus the result is, as Barnes desires, more active and more aggressive. Compared with Flaubert's Parrot, Barnes's other biographical fiction, Arthur & George, appears more conventional with its linear narration and reduced self-reflexivity. However, easily visible existence of historical records like letters or newspapers side by side with the obvious fictional input of Barnes disrupts the superficial conventionality of Arthur & George.

4.3. Arthur & George

In his tenth novel, as the title suggests, Julian Barnes introduces biographies of two real life historical subjects whose distinctively unparallel lives intersect for a period of time in the beginning years of the twentieth century. One of them is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whose publicity surpassed the national borders as the creator of the iconic detective Sherlock Holmes. The other one is George Edalji, half-Indian solicitor, whose unassuming life in the village of Great Wyrley was temporarily brought to the public attention as he was charged with mutilating livestock of farmers and sentenced to seven years despite the lack of hard evidence. The two disparate lives converge when Doyle decides to organize a public campaign to prove that George is innocent and restore his lost personal dignity. By focusing on this historical event, Julian Barnes develops the life stories of Arthur and George. For this sake, Barnes creates a contextual framework which includes paratextual elements like letters, official reports, and quotations from

newspapers. Barnes's obvious stress on the authenticity of such documents is made clear in the lengthy "Author's Note" section in the novel: "Apart from Jean's letter to Arthur, all letters quoted, whether signed or anonymous, are authentic; as are quotations from newspapers, government reports, proceedings in Parliament, and the writings of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle" (A&G 732). As Peter Childs also indicates, the novel "is very much a work of fiction though Barnes spent two years researching the story behind his plot, which draws on many sources, staying truer to the documented Conan Doyle record than the known story of George Edalji's life" (2011: 140). Apparently, Barnes had little difficulty in finding the raw material for Conan Doyle's biography as being a man of great fame his life is well documented. However, such documents for George Edalji are scarce compared to Doyle. Within such blind spots, Barnes incorporates his fiction which, in turn, blurs the line between fact and fiction.

In Flaubert's Parrot (1984), Barnes asked the question: "how do we seize the foreign past?" (FP 100) To this question, he provided the answer in A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters (1989) with fabulation. "We fabulate," he answered, "we make up a story to cover the facts we don't know or can't accept; we keep a few true facts and spin a new story round them" (History 242). History is the "soothing fabulation" by which "our panic and our pain are eased" (History 242). This is exactly what he does in Arthur & George. Laboriously, he collects authentic historical records, the Parliament and government records, letters and newspaper articles and, then, spins a new story round them. Likewise, Barnes's characters in the novel also fabulate when they face the irretrievability and inaccessibility of the past. Likewise, when he receives the case of George Edalji, Conan Doyle also has to fabulate as the body of the evidence he collects cannot produce a complete picture. Similarly, the constabulary also resorts to fabulation as they cannot come up with solid evidences to accuse George Edalji of mutilating animals. The only one who resists fabulation is George because he "lacks imagination" and is only "fully capable of following the inventions of others — the stories of Noah's Ark, David and Goliath, the Journey of the Magi — but has little such capacity himself" (A&G 12). As he cannot come to terms with his past, George becomes the tragic character of the novel that has to suffer the pains of history.

By providing authentic historical records concerning the case, Barnes foregrounds how fiction is meshed in history. Barnes's novel is in accordance with Hutcheon's claim that historiographic metafiction "plays upon the truth and lies of the historical record," in order to "foreground the possible mnemonic failures of the recorded history and the constant potential for both deliberate and inadvertent error" (1995: 114). This endless play necessarily implies that for each version created out of these historical records, there will always be an alternative. Hutcheon further suggests that "postmodern fiction suggests that to re-write or to re-present the past in fiction and in history is, in both cases, to open it up to the present, to prevent it from being conclusive and teleological" (1995: 110). Even though Barnes takes great pains to introduce a detailed version of the story, he refrains from presenting a strict solution to the case. In "Author's Note," he explains that "the great mystery, however, remained unsolved. All kinds of theories were advanced" (A&G 732). Thus, Barnes accepts that his story of Edalji case is just one of the theories.

A year after Barnes publishes his theory on the case, D. Michael Risinger, a professor of law, writes a lengthy article titled "Boxes in Boxes: Julian Barnes, Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes and the Edalji Case." Setting off with the idea that Arthur & George "is a creative exercise under the special constraint of staying reasonably close to the historical record," Risinger aims to "examine how well Barnes performs under this constraint" (2006: 3) Risinger's tone becomes hostile as he identifies obvious falsifications in the portrayals of George and his family in Barnes's version when compared to the available documents (2006: 29-34). Risinger further criticizes that "George's story is presented as a sort of morality play" in which the narrator "makes it clear that George is totally innocent of any involvement in any of the events that dog his family and later his community" (2006: 31). For Risinger, Barnes declares George innocent within his narration which makes the rest of the novel pointless in which Doyle strives to prove him innocent. However, there are also instances where Barnes presents puzzling documents to raise questions in the reader's mind concerning the purity of George. When Doyle goes to Captain Anson to discuss the case of George, the Captain introduces a letter to prove "rumours of gambling debts, rumours of the misuse of clients' funds" by George. (A&G 552) In other words, the Captain wants to prove

that George might not be as naive as Doyle perceives him. It is obvious from the letter that George is in great debt and begs for money from his superiors:

Dear Sir,
I am reduced from a fairly comfortable position to absolute poverty, primarily through having had to pay a large sum of money (nearly £220) for a friend for whom I was surety. I borrowed from three moneylenders in the hope of righting myself, but their exorbitant interest only made matters worse, & two of them have now presented a bankruptcy petition against me, but are willing to withdraw if I can raise £115 at once. I have no such friends to whom I can appeal, & as bankruptcy would ruin me and prevent me practising for a long time during which I should lose all my clients, I am, as a last resource, appealing to a few strangers. My friends can only find me £30, I have about £21 myself, & shall be most thankful for any aid, no matter how small as it will all help me to meet my heavy liability. Apologizing for troubling you and trusting you may assist me as far as you can. I am,
Yours respectfully,
G.E. Edalji (A&G 553)

To this letter, neither Doyle nor Barnes produces a counter argument. The letter and its black implications about George remain unsettled. Even though the narrator's voice may sound like in favour of George, such instances invoke question marks in the reader. Likewise, Frederick Holmes suggests, "Barnes's undramatized third person narrator does not correct their misperceptions and prejudices in order to provide readers with a broader understanding of reality" (2009: 59). As the novel denies the comfort of proper conclusion by leaving these questions unanswered, the reader is invited to fabulation just like Barnes does. However, Risinger's real concern is Barnes's fidelity to the historical truth and his tone gets even harsher when he claims that Barnes's text is far from historical truth:

The real question is, how far from the historical truth did Barnes stray? And the answer is, pretty damn far. Maybe it would be right to say that Barnes did a poor job on his historical homework. Or maybe he was just unlucky that Gordon Weaver's book *Conan Doyle and the Parson's Son* came out right after his novel was published. Barnes claims to have researched *Arthur & George* for two years. ... Nevertheless, if you want to know what happened in the Edalji case, short of poring through the vestry minutes of Great Wyrley parish for the last half of the 19th century and reading all the Home Office documents yourself, Weaver's book is the best available source by light years (2006: 33).

Risinger's attack on the novel can be seen as groundless because, after all, Arthur & George is a fiction as the product of Barnes's imagination. While it is true that

Barnes benefited from certain historical truth in the composition of the novel, it does not purport to be a documentary depicting the two lives as they were. Likewise, Hutcheon explains that historiographic metafiction "reinstalls historical contexts as significant and even determining, but in so doing, it problematizes the entire notion of historical knowledge," in order to imply "that there can be no single, essentialized, transcendent concept of 'genuine historicity' (as Fredric Jameson desires), no matter what the nostalgia for such an entity" (1995: 85). As in his other novels, Barnes highlights that there can be more than one version of the same historical event. Apart from historical accuracy, Risinger also criticizes the portrayal of George in the novel like a literary critic:

> The George that Barnes creates is not very credible. George is shown to be strangely infantile in most of his reactions to his family and his situation, not just in his exterior manifestations, but in his interior reflections. It is true that, since there is not much evidence of George's characteristics during his youth or otherwise, we cannot say that this violates the author's obligations, but the George that emerges is strangely flat and lifeless (2006: 32).

On the contrary, it can be argued that Barnes's portrayal of George as an infantile character is strongly associated with Barnes's stylistic insistence to provide the opposite of Conan Doyle as an accomplished and dominant character throughout the novel. The duality provided with the opposite characterisation of Arthur and George is also reflected in the structural plan of the novel. Almost more than half of the novel follows successive chapters titled first "Arthur," then "George," respectively. Just within the first two chapters, Barnes installs the duality of his characters: Arthur is directly defined in terms of abilities and adorned with the courageous spirit as he enters into the room in which his grandmother's corpse lay:

> He was able to walk, and could reach up to a door handle. He did this with nothing that could be called a purpose, merely the instinctive tourism of infancy. A door was there to be pushed; he walked in, stopped, looked. There was nobody to observe him; he turned and walked away, carefully shutting the door behind him (A&G 9).

One page later, in the next chapter, George Edalji is introduced. Unlike Arthur who is venturous and able, Barnes introduces George rather as a timid boy who stands in direct opposition to Arthur:

> He is a shy, earnest boy, acute at sensing the expectations of others. At times he feels he is letting his parents down: a dutiful child should remember being cared for from the first. Yet his parents never rebuke him for this inadequacy. ... For a start, he lacks imagination. ... George is fully capable of following the inventions of others — the stories of Noah's Ark, David and Goliath, the Journey of the Magi — but has little such capacity himself (A&G 11).

Similarly, Childs also signifies that "the interaction between the two men is negligible in terms of the development of a relationship but their stories are woven together in ways that compare and contrast their lives as well as treating the real-life connection between them" (2011: 141). To secure the comparison, the first two parts, titled "Beginning" and "Beginning with an Ending," respectively, narrate the lives of the two separately with successive chapters. Step by step, Barnes takes his protagonists into their adult lives when their lives intersect. As Arthur was born years before George, the chapters that narrate Arthur's life are in the past tense, while the chapters relating George's life are in the present tense. It can be argued that this shift of tense in narration throughout chapters hints at the contrast in the protagonists' characters. Raised in the Vicarage, George never indulges himself with imagination because he believes his present makes him happy. His life in the Vicarage is "clear and true and happy, as everything ought to be" (A&G 16). He feels satisfied with the present in the Vicarage as "the world beyond the Vicarage seems to George filled with unexpected noise and unexpected happenings" (A&G 17). In this religious setting, there is only one truth deducted from the Bible: "he is expected to tell the truth because at the Vicarage no alternative exists" (A&G 12). While George is raised in one dimensional religious setting of the Vicarage, Arthur's childhood is adorned with the heroic stories and fairy tales told by her mother. The contention here is that Arthur is a more nostalgic character than George as he is more pleased with his past than George who is rendered happier by his present. Arthur also attended the church but for him, both home and church "was filled with presences, with stories and instructions" (A&G 12). The stories told in the church compete with the stories of her mother that he listens at home. Like George, Arthur associates the religious stories with the truth, yet he prefers her mother's stories:

> He understood that what he learned there was the truth; but his imagination preferred the different, parallel version he was taught at home. His mother's stories were also about

far distant times, and also designed to teach him the distinction between right and wrong (A&G 12)

Gradually, Arthur comes to the conclusion that the priest is "a storyteller he no longer believed" (A&G 36). He designates his life within the chivalric codes conveyed in the medieval romances or in the Arthurian legends.

> But Arthur practised the code wherever possible. He was a man of his word; he succoured the poor; he kept his guard against baser emotions; he treated women respectfully; he had long-term plans for the rescue and care of his mother. Given that the fourteenth century had regrettably ended, and that he was not William Douglas, Lord of Liddesdale, the Flower of Chivalry himself, this was the best Arthur could currently manage (A&G 52).

Barnes portrays Arthur as very much inspired by the English history though he was "Irish by ancestry, Scottish by birth" (A&G 51). His life becomes a life of accomplishments which includes heroic acts like participation in a killing of a whale and joining the Second World War. George, on the other hand, rids his life of the dominion of religion as he starts studying law to become a solicitor envisioning himself "with a desk, a set of bound law books and a suit with a fob chain slung between his waistcoat pockets like golden rope" (A&G 55). Despite his Parsee origins, he feels himself English: "He is English, he is a student of the laws of England, and one day, God willing, he will marry according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England" (A&G 91). However, towards the end of his studies, he starts questioning the very tenets he builds his life on:

> The tenets of the Church of England have increasingly become a distant given. He does not sense them as close truths, or see them working from day to day, from moment to moment. .... At school, additional stories and explanations of life were put before him. This is what science says; this is what history says; this is what literature says… But now he has discovered the law, and the world is beginning finally to make sense. Hitherto invisible connections — between people, between things, between ideas and principles — are gradually revealing themselves (A&G 133).

In the first part, Arthur and George are portrayed dwelling on the different realms. George is realistic and his life is never touched with the idea of imagination. While George finds the truth in law, Arthur's life is romantic and heroic. The successive chapters continue in the second part, titled "Beginning with an Ending." Within the

chapters titled “George,” the serial animal mutilations that takes place in Great Wyrley is covered in which George is finally convicted. Thus, for George, the beginning refers to the start of the crime and the ending refers to his imprisonment. In Arthur’s chapters, however, the developments in the private and professional life of Arthur are related. While the humble life of George is disrupted by the case brought against him, Arthur’s life, who is now married with children, seems to be settled down as he enjoys the wealth and the fame brought by stories of Sherlock Holmes. However, to this fact Arthur reacts:

> Arthur was not yet ready for the end of his own story. If life was a chivalric quest, then he had rescued the fair Touie, he had conquered the city, and been rewarded with gold. But there were years to go before he was prepared to accept a role as wise elder to the tribe. What did a knight errant do when he came home to a wife and two children in South Norwood? (A&G 115)

For Arthur, then, the beginning is the commencement of his extra-marital relationship with Jean Leckie which remains unconsummated even much after the death of his wife, Touie, while the ending is Touie’s death of tuberculosis. Within this part, Barnes introduces a chapter titled “George & Arthur,” which foreshadows the ultimate intersection in their lives. The narrator in the chapter depicts a scene in which an unidentified man sneaks into a farm to mutilate a horse. Significantly, the narration in the chapters of George shifts to the past tense at the day he is arrested which is marked by the narrator as “the last normal twenty-four hours of his life” (A&G 194). Even though he is arrested, George is still optimistic because in the prison he feels himself at home:

> But those tormenters and these blunderers had delivered him to a place of safety: to his second home, the laws of England. He knew where he was now. Though his work rarely took him to a courtroom, he knew it as part of his natural territory. ... Judges, magistrates, barristers, solicitors, clerks, ushers: this was their kingdom, where they spoke to one another in a *lingua franca* others could often barely comprehend (A&G 224).

Besides, as George believes that the evidence produced at the court is contingent, he is sure that the case “would not get as far as judges and barristers” (A&G 225). However, George is found guilty by the jury and sentenced to seven years. George feels heavily betrayed by the law on which he ascribes certainty and truth forgetting that

once he celebrated the law as it holds the power of "explaining how words can and do mean different things" (A&G 134). George's imprisonment both means the collapse and the end of his subtle life and justifies the shift to the past tense in the narration.

When the narration of George's life shifts to the past tense, accordingly, the narration shifts to present in Arthur's life. The shift occurs in the last chapter of the second part which starts as: "And then he meets Jean" (A&G 337). At the time when Arthur meets Jean, he is married with children. The illness of his wife makes divorce an impossible option as he is brought up within the codes of chivalry. His public fame, on the other hand, complicates the already intricate situation. While in the past, there are reminiscences of the happy days with Touie which undermines the love he nourishes for Jean, the future points towards eventual death of his sick wife and his union with Jean under the shadow of the death:

> [Jean] will never be a mistress; Arthur already has a wife; nor is she, can she be, a fiancé. To be a fiancé is to say: I am waiting for his wife to die. There were such understandings between couples, she knew, but that is not to be theirs. Their love is different. It has no past, and no future that can be thought about; it has only the present (A&G 354).

Arthur is stuck in the present fearing both the future and the past. At that moment arrives George's letter which calls for Arthur's help and which "[shrugs] off the lethargy and despondence that have afflicted him these past months" (A&G 428). Sworn to support the weak against the strong as a knight, Arthur decides to take action in the Edalji case. The third part, "Ending with a Beginning," then, narrates Arthur's chivalric participation in George's case. For George, this is the part where the two lives intersect. Like Sherlock Holmes, Arthur collects evidences, interrogates witnesses and inspects the crime scene. Then, he presents the overall account to the Home Office which declines to review the case again. Raged by the attitude of the judicial system, Arthur organizes a public campaign for George in which he writes an article about the case to be published in the newspapers. Arthur successfully moulds the public opinion against which the Home Office is obliged to review the case. The final verdict of the Home Office, however, disappoints both Arthur and George because he is found both guilty and innocent:

On the other hand, being unable to disagree with what we take to be the finding of the jury, that Edalji was the writer of the letters of 1903, we cannot but see that, assuming him to be an innocent man, he has to some extent brought his troubles upon himself (A&G 636).

The Home office decides to grant a "free pardon" without any compensation (A&G 636). As the title of this part suggests, George's days of guilt comes to an end. For Arthur, it symbolizes the end of his mourning days for his deceased wife and heralds the beginning of his new life with Jean. Likewise, it is a fresh beginning for George too not because he is half cleaned from his conviction, but as he is welcomed back in the society as signified by Arthur and Jean's invitation to their wedding. In the wedding

To George's surprise and considerable relief, people come up and speak to him; they seem to know who he is, and greet him as if they are almost his familiars. .... George realizes that all of them are treating him as a deeply wronged man; not one of them looks at him as if he were the private author of a series of insane and obscene letters. There is nothing directly said; just an implicit assumption that he is the sort of fellow who generally understands things in the way they also generally understand things (A&G 657).

The last part, titled "Endings" and comprised of one section, relates Arthur's funeral to which George also attends. At his fifties, George is now settled in London and lives with his sister. His notorious public fame which sparkled for a brief period of time is now over. Arthur's funeral is performed as a big spiritual séance in which a medium appears to call for the spirit of Arthur. Likewise, despite the funeral, Barnes problematizes the "ending" of Arthur as he informs in "Author's Note" that "Arthur continued to appear at séances around the world for the next few years" (A&G 729). Regarding Arthur's fascination with spiritualism and his belief in the possibilities of the afterlife, Barnes suggests that his dead might not be an ending for Arthur. Barnes indicates further possibilities as he uses three tense at the end of his novel while George gazes at the stage in Arthur's funeral:

What does he see?
What did he see?
What will he see? (A&G 729)

Within this structural plan of the novel, Barnes develops biographies of two distinct individuals. Even though Barnes's narration of the biographies which start with the birth and end with the death of the subjects might be associated with conventional biography (McCullagh, 2003: 7), what Barnes does is innovative as he introduces a comparative biography in the narration which, for a time, relates the two lives in parallel and then merges them at one point. Besides, Barnes's strong emphasis on the authenticity of the records he makes use of during the narration renders the points where the fiction starts and where it finishes hard to spot. Celebrating Arthur & George as "one of the most satisfying novels of Barnes' career," Childs points out the novel as the outlet which "reasserts Barnes' considerable powers as a novelist who is a skilled fabulist and perennial experimenter" (2011: 156). In this novel, Barnes collects historical records which are natural elements of biography and then fabulates on these historical records. His meticulous search on authentic historical records and his talent at creating fictional stories out of such records make the novel a successful biographical fiction.

Both in Flaubert's Parrot and Arthur & George, Barnes incorporates biography and fiction to create distinct forms. The distinctiveness of these forms provides Barnes with a prolific space on which he can build his fiction by incorporating the historical record. This prolific space also lets Barnes to introduce new interpretations. His fiction gains fresh possibilities of meanings as it is compromised with the factual structure of biography. In other words, through such compromise, Barnes enhances the power of his fiction. According to Christine Berberich, Arthur & George "is, at first glance, a gentle historical novel seemingly set apart from Barnes's earlier work by both the modified realism created by the third-person narrator and, more importantly, a different attitude to the past" (2011: 119). She further asserts that "the novel appears considerably more straightforwardly historical in the sense that it is less experimental and self-reflexive" compared to Flaubert's Parrot (2011: 119). It is true that the conventional aspects of Arthur & George are quite visible as its third person linear narration may suggest. However, if analysed with regard to the body of Barnes's work which is distinguished by his never ending formal plays, Arthur & George can be argued to be yet another experiment of Barnes with historical narration. Despite its conventionality, the novel can also be perceived as one of Barnes's formal attempts to introduce a form which best

narrates the past. Both Flaubert's Parrot and Arthur & George, then, are experimental biographical fictions where Barnes installs different forms which also reflect his overall concern in formal plays to narrate the past.

CONCLUSION

Through a theoretical, thematic and structural analyses of the selected novels by Julian Barnes, the aim of this thesis has been to discuss how postmodernism problematizes the knowledge about the past and also how postmodern historiographic metafiction deals with the problematic task of relating the past accurately. Displaying a great range of variety in terms of style and theme, Barnes's fiction explores in a postmodernist fashion the possible ways to narrate the past, and this makes Barnes an experimental novelist. Despite their formal and stylistic differences, each novel focused on in this study is concerned with the questioning of the authenticity in historical narration, the reliability of the narrator-historian and the adequacy of the form. It has been argued in the thesis that, as a response to this concern and questioning, his fiction suggests that histories are not narrated but re-made. It has also been argued that in his fiction, history becomes the discourse of the narrator-historian who shapes the historical account in accordance with his socio-cultural positioning which is why the narrator historian does not narrate the historical event, but re-makes it. In other words, the historical accounts become the fictionalized versions of the historical events. These versions, therefore, are inherently subjective constructions. The ideologically situated narrator-historian creates a plausible but biased narrative out of a historical event by grafting into the narrative his preconceived ideas. Through metafictional gestures, as one of the most common strategies in the postmodern novel, Barnes lays bare this process of re-making histories which, in turn, adds a metahistorical quality to his fiction.

As if in interaction with the postmodern theories of history, especially with the postmodernist claim that history is a work of fiction, Barnes's fiction functions as a testing ground on where these theories can be applied. The first chapter has introduced the discussion on the problematic dichotomy of history and fiction starting

chronologically from the classical antiquity and ending with the postmodernity. In classical Greece, although the historians like Herodotus and Thucydides claimed their histories to be free of fictional elements, they still referred to the fictional works of Homer and treated him as historical minded poet. On the other hand, among Roman and medieval historians, emphasis on the rhetorical and didactic purposes overshadowed the concern for accuracy and truthfulness. The Enlightenment witnessed the rise of philosophy of history in Vico and Hegel's works which highlighted the dialectical progress in the historical process of events. The Rankean school, however, came up with the scientific history aiming to relate in an objective way what really happened. For this purpose, historical research was privileged, depending on rigorous search on the historical trace by entirely disassociating history from fiction.

Postmodernism rewrites and blends history and fiction. Rejecting objectivity in any historical narration, postmodern theoreticians on history suggest that historical narration is a subjective act which becomes a personally hermeneutic interpretation of history. Moreover, in accordance with the stressed textual nature of history, the historical material, be it a monument or a letter, is approached as a text. The postmodern notion of text indicates that all texts are comprised of quotations. When the textuality of both the history and the historical trace, by virtue of which histories are written, is analysed within this indication, the possibility to create an accurate narration of the past events becomes problematized since the past is gone forever and it can only be glimpsed at through these historical traces. It can be argued, then, history is the reading of the historical trace by the historian and this reading cannot produce an objective account because the historian is preconditioned in terms of race, gender, religion and politics. What is challenged in the postmodern theories of history is the idea of a disinterested history free of interpretation. History is ideologically shaped by socio-cultural and material interests. Embedded in discourse, history becomes the arena on which the power relationships determine what is to include and exclude. Consequently, it is more justifiable to ask "who is history for?" instead of "what is history?".

In the postmodern period, history, like fiction, is considered as a linguistic construct and historical discourses are systems of signification. In other words, the crude historical event does not possess any meaning, but it is attributed a meaning by

the historian who is obliged to refer to the historical trace which functions like a post-structuralist free floating signifier. Therefore, each interpretation of the past necessarily reveals a different version which, thereby, produces a different historical knowledge. In parallel with this, postmodern historiographic metafiction challenges the monolithic, totalitarian grand historical narratives by introducing alternative versions. These self-reflective and impartial versions are narrated by unreliable narrators who are self-conscious of their own limitations and constraints. The metafictional quality of the historiographic metafiction does not only foreground the artificiality of the fictional text, but also signals the constructed nature of every kind of historical narration.

As it has been argued in thesis, while the high degree of self-awareness, common in historiographic metafiction, lays bare the artificiality of the fictional text and its processes of creating a version of reality, it also challenges the reader to question how he produces his own reality. Fiction cannot reflect or reproduce the reality, but can only introduce a fictional version of that reality. Moreover, by causing unexpected ontological shifts within the fictional text using metafictional plays, the historiographic metafiction subverts the boundary that separates fact and fiction. Unlike the conventional historical novels which are highly concerned with increasing the credibility of the fictional worlds they create, the historiographic metafiction points at the artificiality of the text using postmodern novelistic strategies like discontinuities, ruptures, gaps in the narration, by self-consciously manipulating the historical record, and laying bare the processes through which the historical record is assimilated into a plausible narrative. By this way, the reader is constantly reminded of the governing determinants in historical writing.

It has also been argued in the thesis that the authors of postmodern historiographic metafiction are critical against the grand narratives of history which tends to be both totalitarian and authoritarian. Challenging the mainstream official histories imposed by the dominant ideologies, they come up with their own histories to discredit and problematize the established versions. Either by revising or totally negating the established orthodox versions, they re-make histories often by voicing the silenced, by centralizing the decentred. By means of parody, intertextual games and formal variety, they assume a deconstructive enterprise which entails juxtaposition of

the orthodox versions. The deconstructions of the taken for granted value of the grand historical narratives, the historical record, and the narrative formats and tools for representation of the past make room for the authors of the historiographic metafiction to critically examine the value of the historical knowledge and the adequacy of the form to represent the past. It has been suggested in the study that Julian Barnes's fiction is significant in this respect as his fiction covers a great variety of formal plays and thematic explorations regarding the postmodern problem of narrating the past accurately. In order to demonstrate this variety, the selected novels by him have been classified in three chapters with respect to official history, personal history and biography writing. Official history refers to the type of history of a nation or a group of people designated according to the ruling ideology by the state while personal history refers to individual life story of the ordinary person. Biography, however, is the historical account of an important figure's life depending on hard evidences like letters, diaries, or personal interviews.

In the second chapter, Barnes's three novels, A History of the World in 10½ Chapters, The Porcupine and England, England have been analysed to discuss how he treats the official history. These novels do not simply narrate history, but point out the processes determinant in the construction and working of the official history. It has been argued that while they differ in terms of context and style, they all tend to emphasize the ideologically partial and limited tone of those histories. Although the official history pretends to be encompassing and all-inclusive, these novels suggest that it rather tends to be repressive omitting or silencing the opposite voices. Like other historical discourses, Barnes shows that the official history is a construct engineered by the dominant ideology of the state. Therefore, the official historical discourses do not retell what happened in the past, they process the past and re-make it.

In A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters, certain historical events are reconstructed by the fictitious witnesses which falsify the established versions. By means of this, Barnes introduces multiple discourses of the defeated, the victim, the marginalized and the excluded which challenge the overarching grand narratives of history by coming up with alternative versions. These discourses are related within through discrepant and seemingly unrelated chapters in which certain motives and

themes appear repeatedly highlighting the repetitive nature of history. While in this novel Barnes introduces alternative versions of the official world history and composes "a history" of the world which implies the acknowledgment of the possible other histories, in The Porcupine, he depicts how a new developing system adjusts the official history of a nation and the importance of rhetoric in the re-organization of the nation's official history. By creating fictional setting of a country in a transition from communism to capitalism, he emphasizes how rhetoric is put to use by each successive stage of history. The official history of the previous stage is erased or revised by introducing symbolic changes. In this re-making of the official history, the national heroes become the public enemies, historical truths are distorted, shaped, or disavowed completely. The novel shows that all these changes take place to secure the forging of new national identity. In England, England, the national past is transformed into a commodity to be marketed. Barnes builds a dystopic island on which the official history of England is transformed into marketable commodity as if to keep up with the consumerist culture nourished by wild capitalism. The novel includes the arguments regarding the constructed nature of the official history, loss of authenticity and originality and substitution of it with simulacra. In parallel with this, Barnes also conducts another argument by linking the personal identity with the national identity. Within the three parts of the novel, Barnes discusses in parallel how individual identity is associated with memory and how collective national identity is related to the official history. However, Barnes problematizes the issue by foregrounding the unreliability of memory and constructed nature of the official history. On the whole, the chapter has argued that the three novels put emphasis on the constructed nature of the official historical discourses showing that they are produced by the re-making of histories. It has also been argued that these historical discourses play an essential role in the formation of the national identities.

By taking Before She Met Me, Talking it Over and The Sense of an Ending into consideration, the following chapter has focused on the personal history. Although these novels may not be historical novel proper, it has been argued that they are deeply concerned with the questions of coming to terms with one's past, the possibility to narrate the past accurately, the plurality in the historical discourse, and fictionalization of history. The formal variety as the characteristic of his fiction is also apparent in these

three novels. Before She Met Me has a conventional form with its third person narration which contains a proper beginning, middle and end. However, in the novel, Barnes raises the postmodern debate on the thinning line between history and fiction by introducing an academic historian who constructs an account of the private history of his wife not by means of solid historical evidence and reasoning but by resorting to his imagination and fictional texts. By this way, Barnes indicates that invention and imagination lie at the heart of all historical narrations. All historical discourses, be it official, religious or personal, include the unavoidable act of interpretation which puts forward the question of reliability. Moreover, the act of interpretation may produce contradictory versions of the same event, which is the core of the argument on Talking it Over. The novel is polyphonic in that it contains multiple narrators who, through monologues, introduce their versions of their shared history. As has been argued, each discourse in the novel negates the other in the competition for authority and authenticity. Thereby, each narrator in the novel becomes unreliable. The case of unreliability is moved one step further in The Sense of an Ending, as the first person narrator is highly self-conscious about his limitations and his unreliability as he embarks to reconcile with his past. During the narration, his memory fails him and each revealed historical document contradicts his narration. It has been argued that Barnes invalidates the reliability of his narrators by making their narrative problematic and flawed. The subjective interpretations of the historical trace, the ideologically and psychologically conditioned positions of the narrators threaten the accuracy of the personal histories. Within the postmodern context and by foregrounding these determinants in the construction of a historical discourse, Barnes shows how histories are made and, then, re-made again and again.

In the final chapter, Barnes's biographical fictions have been analysed. Both in Flaubert's Parrot and Arthur & George, he pushes the conventional biography form to its limits by incorporating biography, fiction and autobiography in one form. Within this incorporation, Barnes mixes fact and fiction by introducing historical facts and records to his narrations. In Flaubert's Parrot, Barnes introduces character Geoffrey Braithwaite, an amateur biographer, who attempts to write an authentic biography of Gustave Flaubert. However, Braithwaite's account becomes the reading of Flaubert's life in parallel with his own life. In other words, the biography of the writer is shaped by the

personal input of the biographer. Moreover, the inevitable distortion and deterioration of the historical records and relics within passage of years, as symbolized by the stuffed parrot in the novel, makes it impossible to have an authentic account. Rather than providing certainties concerning Flaubert, the novel displays the processes of biography writing which is full of uncertainties. Arthur & George, however, seems more conventional and less self-reflexive. However, it has been suggested in the study that easily visible existence of historical records like letters or newspapers side by side with the obvious fictional input of Barnes disrupts the superficial conventionality of the novel in which he introduces biographies of two distinct historical figures whose lives intersect at one point of history. Barnes declares that all the paratextual elements in the novel, like letters or newspaper articles, are authentic. This strong emphasis on the authenticity of the records used in the narration makes it hard to pinpoint where the fiction starts and where it finishes. In both novels, Barnes violates the boundaries that separate biography and fiction insisting on the impossibility of recovering one's life authentically. Like other historical narratives, biography writing also includes interpretation, personal input, and fictionalization.

Despite the variety in form, on the whole, Barnes's fiction displays an apparent concern with history. Although the form changes, this basic concern of his fiction remains firm. The variety of the form in these novels suggests that his fiction explores and tests possible ways of relating the past. Moreover, this variety can be associated with the various historical discourses, like the official and personal histories, or biography writing, discussed by Barnes in his fiction. By analysing the eight selected novels by him, it has been argued in the thesis that histories are re-made within these discourses. The way these discourses re-make histories depends on various determinants. As has been argued, the historian, as the composer of the historical narratives, approaches the past with preconceived ideas which become a hindrance to asses and evaluate it objectively. Moreover, by laying bare the processes of historical writing, his fiction makes the reader question the taken for granted value of all historical narrations. The reader is cautioned against a naive approval of what is presented to him as the narration of the past. In other words, his fiction defamiliarizes the history for the reader; it enables the reader to observe and come to realise that historical narrations are not completely objective accounts of the past, but subjective interpretations of the

historians. Likewise, Barnes's characters are also aware that narrating the past is a tricky business. They are sometimes amateur and sometimes professional historians who tirelessly investigate the past. With a varying degree of self-awareness of their task, these characters reflect the difficult task of retelling the past. Through such metafictional gestures, Barnes elucidates the processes of construction in any kind of historical narrative and, hence, suggests that the historical narratives are not accounts in which the past is retold, but they are accounts in which the past is re-made.

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VITA

Name and Surname	: Baysar TANIYAN
Mother's Name	: Havva
Father's Name	: Cafer
Birth Place and Date	: Diyarbakır / 1983
BA	: Pamukkale University Faculty of Science and Letters Department of English Language and Literature (2006)
MA	: Pamukkale University Institute of Social Sciences Department of English Language and Literature (2009)
Work Place and Position	: Pamukkale University Faculty of Science and Letter Department of English Language and Literature - Research Assistant